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ABSTRACT

This publication on reading assessment and evaluation is an outgrowth of the "Assuring Competency in Reading Advisory Conference." It features abstracts, presentations, handouts, and activities from the conference. Following a short introduction, Section One, "Promising Practices", includes the following articles: "Tips for Parents About Reading" (Deborah Davis); "Reading Comprehension: The Middle School Dilemma" (Sonja Grove); "Learning to Read and Write: A Place to Start" (Rebecca Novick); "The Traits of an Effective Reader: A Framework for Addressing State Standards in Reading" (Lesley Thompson); "Using the Curriculum Inquiry Cycle to Improve Teaching and Learning in Reading" (Jane Braunger and Maureen Carr); "Effective Practices for Utilizing Volunteer Reading Tutors" (Jana Potter and Nancy Henry); and "Para-education: Teamwork that Leads to Success!" (Karen A. Schmidt and Rose Miller). Section Two, "Master Teacher Talks," includes the following articles: "Using Multiple Intelligences to Meet Academic Needs and Achieve Student Success" (Kristen Dalpiaz and Lynn Nystrom); "If We Did It, You Can Do It Too! Changing Instruction to Meet Demands" (Karen Herinckx and Anna Lee James); "R.E.A.D. in Montana" (Callie Epstein, Shelly Wanty, Peggy Taylor, and Jetta Johnson); and "Developing Reading through Writing" (Susan Marchese). Section Three, "Successful School Shares/Comprehensive Reform," contains the following 4 articles: "Model Classroom Projects" (Kathy Porterfield, Mari Donohue, and Judi Johnson); "Successful School Share: Village Schools in Alaska" (Kathy Baldwin and Joan McGrath); "Toppenish High School 1998-1999 Reading Program" (Nancy Brulotte and Jenae O'Hara); and "Kennewick School District Comprehensive Reading Plan" (Ardis Sparks and Tracy Hamar). The document concludes with the section "Focus Group Conclusions and Survey Results" which presents feedback from conference participants. (EF)

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Resources for reading reform

Assuring Competency in Reading

Presentations compiled from the Assuring Competency in Reading Advisory Conference—Vancouver, Washington, 1999

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Assuring Competency in Reading: Resources for Reading Reform

July 1999

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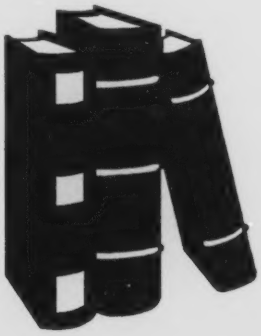
Conference organizers would like to thank the participants, presenters, keynote speakers, and NWREL staff who gave their time and energy to the conference in the hope that students would see success in achieving state standards in reading.

NWREL acknowledges the fine wealth of research, practice and application that went into the development of the presenters' materials. The materials have been reproduced exactly as the presenters compiled them. All annotation of source material is the responsibility of the original presenters.

Lesley D. Thompson, Ph.D. Kevin Dwyer. M.A.



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Introduction

In February 1999, the Assessment and Evaluation Program at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) presented reading assessment and evaluation as a special conference topic at the "Assuring Competency in Reading Advisory Conference" due to the enormous interest reading is receiving at the national, state, and local levels. With the introduction of state standards in reading, districts and states across the country are responding to the increase in expectations for our student readers with unprecedented energy and enthusiasm. Educational policy has "raised the bar" so to speak, and educational institutions are addressing the training and professional development needs in a variety of ways.

The "Assuring Competency in Reading Advisory Conference," was held at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington February 25-26, 1999. It drew 275 participants, presenters, and keynoters from ten different states. The desire of participants to build a deeper knowledge base in the issues of reading assessment, standards-based instructional approaches, and comprehensive reform efforts reflected the educational community's commitment for students to improve their reading achievement and truly become lifelong learners.

This publication, **Assuring Competency in Reading: Resources for Reading Reform,** is an outgrowth of the enthusiasm and interest generated by our conference proceedings in February, 1999. Back in the Fall of 1998 when we initially proposed the idea for a conference focused on reading assessment and evaluation, we conservatively estimated that 50 educators would accept our invitation to attend the two-day conference. To our surprise, however, within one month of announcing the conference topic, the Assessment and Evaluation program at NWREL received 1,000 calls from educators hoping to attend the conference. It is this interest that has driven us to develop not only follow-up conferences that will explore similar topics, but also to develop a publication that features abstracts, handouts, and activities from the conference itself.

In addition to the conference, NWREL has stepped forward to take a leadership role in improving reading instruction and assessment in our five state region and across the country. We have several fine programs that are producing publications, workshops, and technical assistance that all address the theoretical and practical applications of "good reading" in the classroom and beyond. NWREL's reading specialists work in the areas of early childhood literacy, reading instruction, reading assessment, curriculum development, tutorial support, and parent involvement. The sponsor of the conference, the Assessment and Evaluation program at NWREL, features the "Traits of an Effective Reader" reading assessment project. It has served over 2000 clients, delivered over 70 workshops, and has published a book entitled **The Journey of a Reader: K-12 Assessment Tasks and Tools.** In addition to the six traits of critical reading, the project has specialized workshops and materials that improve reading across the content areas, vocabulary acquisition, technical reading, and the extended response assessment model for large scale reading assessment. NWREL is always looking for ways to collaborate among our areas of expertise in order to offer even more comprehensive technical assistance and training to educators in the field.

The conference agenda encompassed a variety of programs, speakers, discussion groups, and training opportunities. The conference agenda was organized into these three core areas: "Promising Practices"—presentations by NWREL reading staff members; "Successful School Shares and Comprehensive Reform"—presentations by schools and districts that have markedly raised reading test scores through purposeful program development; "Master Teacher Talks"—presentations by master teachers who help student readers improve skill and understanding.

In addition to the full slate of presentations, the conference also featured keynote speakers from the state departments of education for the states of Oregon and Idaho, Montana, and Washington. Each of the keynote speakers—language arts specialists from their respective states—focused on their current state efforts to support student success with regard to the implementation of state standards in reading. Further, the conference offered several focus groups that addressed current topics of interest that impact reading educators from the classroom level through the state level. The information presented and discussed helped to focus attention on particular areas that will, in turn, create awareness towards increasing reading achievement for all students. Please see the concluding chapter of this publication for more information on the focus groups and a final evaluation of needs in the field of reading.

NWREL purposefully requested presentations to be practical, focused on achieving standards, and reflective of student growth and achievement. We hope the conference handouts will provide you with planning tools to help shape your classroom, your building, your district, and even your state's plans for helping students meet reading standards.

In our experience working with educators around the country, we have recognized seven key components to successful comprehensive planning efforts in the field of reading. We want to share these components with you and encourage you to keep them in mind as you look through the conference handouts and talk to your colleagues. They are:

- **Identify and define what your building and/or district believes good readers should know and be able to do at various grade levels.** Be specific and clear in your definition. This is your opportunity to create a mission statement for your teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members. A strong mission statement serves as a common goal that everyone can help achieve.

- **Use common terminology for reading terms, kindergarten through graduation, to talk about your beliefs, definitions, goals, and standards in respect to reading.** Using the same language when talking about pertinent issues encourages clear communication and a common vision. When different buildings within a single district use different reading programs, language usage can become "muddied." Even when programmatic approaches vary, strive to define terms such as "comprehension" and "reading process" so your entire staff agrees on meaning and usage.

- **Establish goals and dream big**. Establish a goal that 90% of 3rd graders will be reading on grade level by the end of third grade, or that a majority of eighth-graders will meet the standard on the state assessment reading rest. Decide what goal(s) will reflect the course you have taken to make your definition of good reading a reality. Lofty ambitions can never hurt; and you just might achieve them. Make your goals known to the public and through all contact with parents. Enlist the support of your community and parents to help achieve your goal. Set enough time so that you can take little steps toward a big accomplishment. Usually three years is long enough to accomplish significant change.

- **Develop criteria that will be used to assess student achievement.** Have grade-level groups in your building, your district, and/or your state meet and determine specific criteria that will be used to assess student growth. Criteria is the language that defines levels of performance for each trait or skill assessed. When criteria is used, there is no "right" or "wrong" answer; instead, criteria indicates the level of quality.

- **Align your curriculum, kindergarten through graduation, with state and/or local reading standards.** This is important. By aligning your curriculum with the standards, you ensure that everyone is headed toward the same destination: growth in achievement! Make sure that your primary curriculum not only aligns with the primary standard but also incorporates skill-building that will be needed for later benchmarks. Create consistency and fluidity between grade levels. The elementary should be aware of the middle school's benchmarks and the middle school should be aware of the high school's benchmarks. By aligning curriculum, establishing "best" instructional practices, and using common assessment methods, you make the journey of a reader clear for everyone: students, teachers, and parents.

- **Develop multiple sources of assessment that reflect your standards.** Reading is difficult to assess. Students go through a "process" when they read. Yet, to assess their growth as a reader, we must assess an "echo" of that process through some sort of product. In order to create the most valid and authentic picture of an individual reader's level of competency (with regard to standards), we need to use a multi-layered system of assessment. We advocate implementing a portfolio of assessments. For elementary students, consider using anecdotal notes, running records, standardized test scores, oral retellings, and written samples. For middle school students, consider using a wide variety of written samples that reflect responses to several content areas, standardized test scores, and large-scale short-answer and extended-response assessments. For high school students, consider using all of the appropriate assessment ideas for middle school, and also create as many "real-life" reading response opportunities as possible. Application of reading knowledge is key as students move from school to work or higher education.

- **Understand that creating a comprehensive plan for reforming reading practices in your building, district, and/or state is an on-going, sustainable effort that will take time.** It takes time and energy to "stretch" our understandings and grow as professionals. Keep your end goal in sight: Students will become better readers, able to comprehend texts with insight and purpose; they will be able to interpret and synthesize texts and the world where they live; and finally, they will be able to apply their reading knowledge to make good decisions and choices in their lives ahead.

Good luck to all of you as you develop, refine, and implement your reading plans. Whether your concerns lie with the classroom, the building, the district, and/or the state, you are helping to create a powerful journey for readers of all ages.

Promising Practices

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

Promising Practices

The "Promising Practices" sessions at the Assuring Competency in Reading Advisory Conference included presentations on a variety of reading research and development activities being undertaken by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL). This series of presentations was designed to provide current reading research information and classroom applications of promising instructional practices.

Three presentations focused on the attainment of state standards in reading through alignment of classroom instruction, curriculum and trait-based assessment. Drs. Jane Braunger and Maureen Sherry Carr, of the School Improvement Program at NWREL presented on a curriculum inquiry cycle designed to help teachers reflect on their instructional practices. Another NWREL staff member, Dr. Lesley Thompson, of the Assessment and Evaluation Program, focused on the Traits of an Effective Reader Assessment Model that demonstrates ways that teachers can align their reading assessment with state standards and enable students to develop the critical reading skills necessary for success. Dr. Sonja Grove, of the Program and Planning Development Program, discussed several instructional strategies for the middle school student and described the essential elements of a reading classroom based on a "mosaic of thought."

Two other presentations from NWREL, Karen Schmidt of the Program and Planning Development Program and Nancy Henry and Jana Potter from the Community and Volunteer Services Center, focused on the use and impact of tutors and para-educators in supporting students' reading achievement in the classroom. These presentations presented research and suggestions for enlarging the role and importance of after school reading programs and classroom aides in helping all students attain state and local reading standards.

Lastly, presentations by Deborah Davis, of NWREL's Comprehensive Center, and Dr. Rebecca Novick of the Child and Family Program, focused on the need for early literacy development in birth through kindergarten and the role of the school-to-home link in creating successful readers. Both presentations demonstrated the strong impact the family has on creating a solid base of support for the development of student literacy.

Collectively, these presentations suggested an enriched teaching strategy for assuring all students meet and exceed state and local reading standards. The role of the classroom teacher is seen as involving the coordination of curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies that guide expanded learning opportunities for students to develop early reading literacy skills and higher-order skills of critical readers. The presentations emphasize, collectively, the need for thoughtful selection of reading instructional methods that are informed by effective classroom reading assessments. Instruction is a dynamic interaction between students and teachers, parents, aids, and others that provide enriched opportunities for students to learn and practice effective reading skills and strategies to develop literacy and an enjoyment of reading.

Abstracts

Tips for Parents about Reading
Deborah Davis
Comprehensive Center
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Author Deborah Davis in her booklet, "*Tips for Parents about Reading*" provides information and suggestions for parents helping their children learning to read. The information and ideas help children through grade eight succeed with reading.

Highlights of the booklet include the three important things that parents should know about children learning to read. First, learning to read takes time and practice. Second, a variety of experiences and activities help children learn to read. Third, children learn to read best when they have books and other reading materials at home and plenty of chances to read.

After discussing what reading involves and how children learn to read, Davis gives suggestions on how parents can help their children become good readers. General characteristics of reading behaviors for infants through eighth grade provide specific actions/suggestions for parents looking for ways to help their children become better readers. The author also provides specific reading "age and stage" information. For example, characteristics and reading levels are given for what the authors defines as emerging readers (infants and toddlers), developing readers (pre-K and first-graders), transitional readers (second and third-graders), fluent readers (fourth and fifth-graders) and independent readers (sixth through eighth graders). Davis also includes suggested books for age groups to help parents gauge progress and improve skills.

Deborah Davis, a former elementary teacher and current training associate in NWREL's Comprehensive Center, is the author of *Tips for Parents about Reading* and *Easy Ways to Help Learn at Home.*

Reading Comprehension: The Middle School Dilemma
Dr. Sonja Grove
Program and Planning Development
NWREL

Dr. Sonja Grove draws on Ellin Oliver Keene's powerful new book, *Mosaic of Thought: Comprehension Strategies for Reader's Workshop,* in her presentation. She discusses the key points of Keene's text and describes the characteristics of proficient readers. Grove links the qualities that good readers possess to specific reading instructional strategies for teacher use and knowledge. Grove discusses several important instructional tools for supporting good reading habits including mental imagery, story-maps, and other graphic organizers.

Dr. Sonja Grove taught inservice and preservice teachers at Lewis and Clark College for eleven years. She also taught various classes in reading, curriculum integrated education, and writing at the University of Portland's Teacher Education program. She facilitated writer's conferences for teachers and others for ten years. She is currently developing reading and instruction packets for school districts at the NWREL.

The Traits of an Effective Reader: A Framework for Addressing State Standards in Reading

Dr. Lesley D. Thompson
Assessment and Evaluation Program
NWREL

NWREL's Dr. Thompson developed the six traits of an effective reader after an exhaustive literature review into the question: "What do good readers know and what are they able to do?" The six traits of an effective reader are: decoding conventions, establishing comprehension, realizing context, developing interpretations, integrating for synthesis, and critiquing for evaluation. By organizing the process and product of reading into six manageable trait areas, readers are able to see their strengths and challenge areas and use scoring guides and developmental continuums to trace their developing skills. Dr. Thompson has included a sample scoring guide for reading an informational text along with two student samples that illustrate two reading responses. Teachers utilizing Thompson's material are able to organize their curriculum around a trait-based framework which aligns with state standards in reading across the country.

Lesley D. Thompson, Ph.D., is a Senior Associate for Assessment and Evaluation at NWREL. Her experience includes developing and delivering workshops in reading, writing, and portfolio assessment. A teacher, writer, and a life-long lover of books, Lesley has published a book and video for NWREL entitled *The Journey of a Reader: Assessment Tasks and Tools.*

Using the Curriculum Inquiry Cycle to Improve Teaching and Learning in Reading

Dr. Jane Braunger and Dr. Maureen Carr
School Improvement Program
NWREL

Growing concern about the achievement of American students and its perceived impact on the nation's economic future prompted the development of a national educational agenda that would prepare American students to function in an exploding information age. The agenda was a call for the systematic restructuring of American education. This presentation addresses this issue and asserts that high-quality learning requires classroom teachers who are knowledgeable about subject matter and learning if students are to reach the academic achievement set forth in content and performance standards.

The authors first propose that we "re-conceptualize" learning and teaching through inquiry. This is essentially changing the "core of educational practice." Teachers must examine their ideas about knowledge, about the role of the students and teachers in the educational process, and about how these ideas or beliefs are translated into instructional practice. The authors views curriculum as a vehicle for change and professional growth for teachers. The emphasis in the process is to view teaching as a part of the process of life-long learning. Braunger and Carr include the "Curriculum Inquiry Cycle" which is a process designed to improve learning and teaching, with the classroom as the area of emphasis. The Curriculum Inquiry Cycle is consistent with the idea of individuals as active constructors of their own learning.

Jane Braunger's professional experience includes K-12 language arts curriculum and staff development, pre-and in-service teacher education, community college and university developmental education, and high school English and reading instruction. **Maureen Sherry Carr's** professional experience includes K-12 language arts and mathematics curriculum and professional development, pre-and in-service teacher education, and elementary and middle school classroom instruction.

Effective Practices for Utilizing Volunteer Reading Tutors

Jana Potter and Nancy Henry
Community and Volunteer Education Services Center
NWREL

In this presentation the authors provide summaries of 13 core understandings about learning to read, from "*Building a Knowledge Base in Reading*" by Jane Braunger and Jan Patricia Lewis. Each core understanding is followed by activity ideas and strategies you can share with your tutors. Modify them to fit your program needs, combine them with your tutors' experiences, or take them as is. Next, the authors include a list created by the Children's Book Committee at the Bank Street College of Education. This committee annually reviews approximately three thousand books to select the six hundred or so that they believe are the best books published for children that year. Potter and Henry include in their presentation a list of these books and some of the criteria that the committee uses for selecting books across grade levels.

The authors next discuss "early literacy tutor training manuals." In this section, Potter and Henry address what to expect from current manuals, provide tips for choosing a manual, and list several manuals that have proven effective.

Nancy Henry has ten years experience as a K-12 teacher in English and language arts. Nancy also spent five years developing and coordinating youth development programs and four years coordinating national service. **Jana Potter** worked for five years as a Head Start teacher and four years as a teacher for Adventure Challenge dealing with emotionally disturbed youth. In addition, Jana spent twelve years developing educational systems in Asia and Africa.

Para-education: Teamwork that Leads to Success!

Karen Schmidt

Program and Planning Development
NWREL

Schmidt contends that purposeful use of para-educators includes providing them with clear objectives which are coordinated with the mission of the school. This requires an initial and continuing investment in the training and development of the para-professional staff who work with students. The goal is to take every student wherever they are and assist them in advancing as far as possible. The wise use of a para-professional staff maximizes individualized instruction to help every child succeed.

Karen Schmidt taught second grade for five years and later substitute taught in grades K-12. She recently completed a master's degree in curriculum and education from Portland State University. A former college English teacher,

Tips for Parents about Reading

Deborah Davis
Comprehensive Center
NWREL

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
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Tips for Parents About Reading

Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory's
Comprehensive Center, Region X and
Curriculum and Instruction Services

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Tips for Parents About Reading

Information and Ideas for Helping Children Through Grade Eight Succeed with Reading

Deborah Davis,
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Jan Patricia Lewis,
Pacific Lutheran University

October 1997

Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory's
Comprehensive Center, Region X and
Curriculum and Instruction Services

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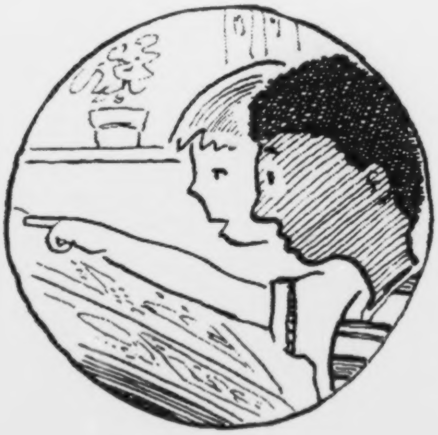

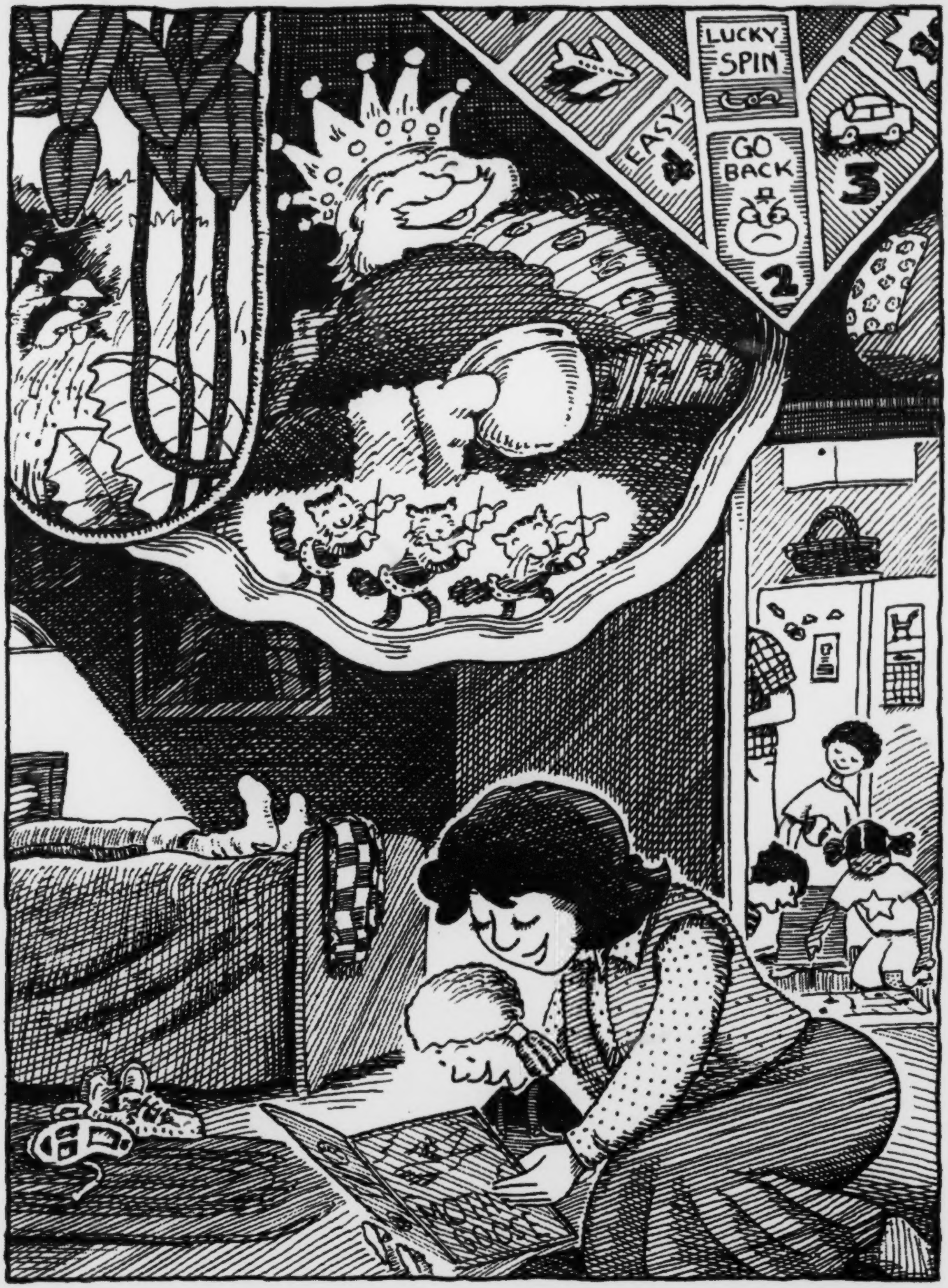
LUCKY SPIN
EASY
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Three Important Things

All parents want the best school experience for their children. And all parents want their children to learn to read. Yet, it is not always easy to tell if your child is on track or if you are doing the right things to help your child. This booklet will give you some ideas about what to expect at different ages and stages of reading development, suggestions for what you can do at home, and a list of favorite books you can find in most libraries for you and your child to read.

Before we get into some details, here are three things to keep in mind:

First

Learning to read is like learning anything else: It happens over time, with practice, and with the help of others. Just like learning to talk, to dance, or to cook, children develop reading (and writing) behaviors in a developmental sequence—they do certain things at certain times as they become more and more knowledgeable.

Second

Many experiences and activities help children learn to read.
The following things contribute to a child's ability to read:

- Talking and interacting with others—kids and adults
- Recognizing and connecting sounds and letters
- Experiencing going places and seeing things
- Instruction on specific reading strategies
- Exposure to all types of reading materials from a child's earliest days throughout the school years

Third

Children learn to read best when they have books and other reading materials at home and plenty of chances to read. This means not only having lots of books around—from libraries, bookstores, and book clubs, as gifts, and as treats—but many chances to read and talk about what they are reading.

Reading As Language

Speaking, listening, writing, and reading: Language is all around us. We use language to tell people what we need, to ask questions, to watch television, to pay bills, to work with others...the list goes on and on.

Reading is just one form of language, the written-down version. Knowing how to use all forms of language well—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—is an important goal for all children. And they need support from both the school and home to be successful with language.

Reading involves thinking and problem solving. It requires us to use knowledge we already have. We must know how to figure out what a word says, and how to put words together to make sense of what is being read. Children will use several strategies for reading within the same sentence. Many familiar words are known by sight. When he reaches a word he does not know, he will probably try to "sound it out" and he will use context clues (how it fits with the other words) to try to make sense of the text.

For example, a child tries to read "The girl ran to the store:"

Child reads:	The girl ran to the s-s-s-s-t.
Then he tries:	The girl ran to the stable.

But this doesn't really make sense in this story, so then he tries:
The girl ran to the stare.

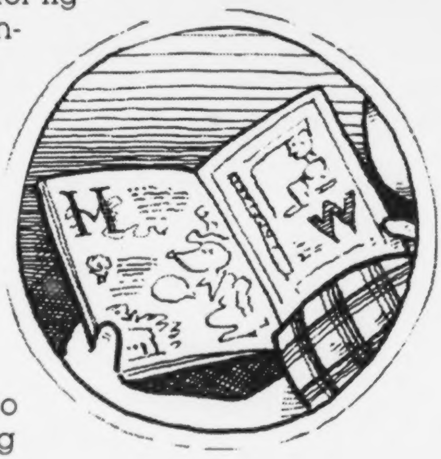
This still doesn't make sense so he notices another letter, an "o," and he's got it: The girl ran to the store.

Children must learn and use many different things to read: They need vocabulary and word recognition skills; they need to know the relationships between sounds and letters, or phonics skills; and they need ways to see if what they are reading makes sense.

As children are emerging as readers in the toddler and preschool stages, they begin learning about reading by being read to and by their attempts to write. Early writing looks a lot like scribbling but it usually represents some thought the child had. Parents can promote children's understandings of text by asking children what they are writing and even writing what they say below their scribbling and then reading it back. Reading and writing go hand in hand and it's important to have materials for writing in addition to books in the home.

Reading As Learning Language

Children can learn the basic foundations of reading and writing in much the same way they learn to listen and speak—informally, at home, and in an unstructured way. But many things must be taught to children. Children need to learn strategies for figuring out unfamiliar words (decoding and context) and they need to learn ways for making meaning from text, also known as comprehension skills.



Both the school and home environments that surround children are important to their success as readers and writers. Classrooms should have all types of reading materials and lots of writing and examples of children's work on the walls—at all ages. Time must be devoted during the school day to reading in books, discussing them, and writing about these experiences.

At home, children should have their own books, writing materials, and a lamp for reading in bed. Newspapers, magazine subscriptions for children and adults, dictionaries, an atlas, and other informational reading materials add to the message that reading is important.

It goes beyond having the materials there, though. Parents must protect children's time from too much television and other activities so that they can read and do other things that reinforce reading skills such as playing games, doing homework, and having conversations with family members.

To be successful readers, children need to do a lot of reading. Parents can make reading fun for kids by having a regular routine for doing it—before bed each night is great, but for some families there are other times that may work better, like after dinner or before school. The important thing is that it happens regularly and that it's a positive experience.

Thirteen Understandings About Reading

In a recent collection of research on reading, *Building a Knowledge Base in Reading* (Braunger & Lewis, 1997), 13 "understandings" about learning to read are explained. These ideas are useful for parents, teachers, and others in deciding how to help children do well in reading.

1. **Reading is a construction of meaning from written text. It involves thinking and the reader's feelings.** Reading requires the use of many different tools—"sounding out" (phonics), sight words, context clues, knowledge of language patterns, and comprehension strategies. The reader's feelings about what he is reading (is it interesting?) and the situation (is she comfortable, threatened, or embarrassed?) also affect reading development.

2. **Background knowledge and prior experiences are critical to the reading process.** As we read, we base our understanding on what we already know. For example: Two children read a book about zoo animals. One child has recently visited the zoo and has read other books about the zoo, and the other has not. Which child will understand more?

3. **Social interaction is essential to learning to read.** As with many things we learn how to do, we tend to learn from others who have already mastered the skill or task. The same is true for reading. Children need to see others reading, they need to hear stories read, ask questions, and talk about what they read—at school and at home. Just like all forms of language, reading requires interaction among people.

4. **Reading and writing develop together.** Reading and writing are connected. Encouraging children to write at all ages (even when it just looks like scribbling) can help them read better and see the connections between reading and writing.

5. **Reading involves complex thinking.** Reading is a problem-solving activity. It involves thinking at different levels—from getting the gist to being able to compare what is read in one text with another and apply what is read in new readings.

6. **The environment or surroundings at home and school should be filled with many experiences in reading and writing.** Access to many different kinds of reading and writing materials—library books, magazines, newspapers, other resources, and supportive adults—all make a huge difference in learning to read. Children need to see adults reading so it seems important.

7. **Children must be interested and motivated to learn to read.** It is important for children to be able to select materials to read that are interesting to them on topics they care about and can relate to.

8. **Children's understandings of print are not the same as adults' understandings.** Children view the world through their own eyes, not adults'. As adults support children in learning reading skills it is important to adjust expectations to children's levels. Initially children become aware that print carries a message, and gradually realize that groups of letters stand for certain sounds, and that print matches spoken words. What children understand is affected by developmental level and prior knowledge.

9. **Children develop phonemic awareness and knowledge of phonics through lots of opportunities and experiences.** Phonemic awareness (the ability to hear separate speech sounds within words), and phonics (the connections between letters and sounds) are very important to learning to read. Many children will learn these skills as they are read to, and as they practice writing, sing repetitive songs, and work with the alphabet. Other children learn these skills best with explicit instruction.

10. **Children need to learn many different reading strategies.** Readers need to be taught how to pay attention to certain things (letter-sound relationships, context clues, and word patterns) depending on the type of text. Readers also need to learn how to self-monitor for comprehension.

11. **Children learn best when teachers use a variety of strategies to teach reading.** There's no evidence that there's one best way to teach reading. Rather, teachers must have a variety of ways to meet children's needs such as reading aloud, shared and independent reading, and guided reading practice.

12. **Children need the opportunity to read, read, read.** The more children read the better they get at it—at school and at home. One of the best ways to practice is for kids to read books and other materials they choose.

13. **Monitoring and assessing how children are reading is important to their success as readers.** Children's mistakes in reading can tell a lot about how well children are doing. Listening to a child read, asking questions, and observing are ways teachers assess regularly. Standardized tests provide another way of measuring children's progress compared with other students. Other tests show how well students are achieving compared to how they should be achieving at grade levels (for example, at fourth, seventh, and 10th grades). This type of assessment can give parents and teachers valuable information so that if a child is not performing at a particular level, help can be given to get the child "back on track."

Ages and Stages

Now that you've looked at what reading involves and how children learn to read, you are probably asking, "What can parents do to help their children be good readers?"

The following descriptions give general guidelines about characteristics of reading behaviors through grade eight. If your child doesn't seem to be doing what is listed at his grade level, look at the earlier or later grade. Use the following suggestions to help your child at home.

Emerging Readers: Infants and Toddlers

Reading begins at birth. These are the kinds of things that lay the foundation for becoming a reader.

Infants:

- Enjoy action nursery rhymes and Mother Goose verses
- Fall asleep to nursery songs and lullabies
- Listen to stories as they are rocked
- Imitate actions of children in books
- Participate in making the sounds of animals in books
- Appear interested in babies in books
- React to rhythm, repetition, and rhyme
- Can point to objects in large, colorful pictures

Toddlers:

- Like to read the same books over and over
- Pick favorite books from the shelf
- Can begin to repeat Mother Goose verses by heart
- Can supply some of the words in short rhyming stories
- Are able to name objects in books and magazines
- Enjoy bathtub and shape books

Things to do:

1. Expect that infants and toddlers will want to munch on books! They don't need to seem interested—reading to children when they are very young gives them valuable time hearing words and looking at pictures.
2. Provide books with heavy pages or "board books."
3. Read books over and over again. Make sure that child-care providers read and talk to your child.
4. Talk about the pictures and ask questions like, "Do you see the dog—where's the dog?" to help them find objects on the page.
5. Repeat nursery rhymes even if you aren't reading from a book.
6. Listen to children's music and encourage movement to the rhythm and singing along.
7. Have children help you use sound effects like "mooooo" or "arf-arf."
8. Make talking to your infant or toddler part of everyday life. Talk about what you are doing and say back what you think she's saying to you.
9. Link reading to real life—for example, toddlers quickly learn concepts of hot and cold. If there's a sun on the page ask, "What's hot in the picture?"
10. Take advantage of your public library. Libraries are great ways to get lots of books into your home at little or no cost—and they often have story time for small children.

Some favorite books:

- **Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?** by Bill Martin, Jr. Holt, 1996.
- **Bunny Cakes** by Rosemary Wells. Dial, 1997.
- **Count and See** by Tana Hoban. Collier, 1974.
- **Each Peach Pear Plum** by Janet & Allan Ahlberg. Scholastic, 1989.
- **Freight Train** by Donald Crews. Tupelo, 1996.
- **Good Night, Moon** by Margaret Wise Brown. HarperCollins, 1991.
- **Have You Seen my Duckling?** by Nancy Tafuri. Putnam & Grosset, 1996.
- **Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?** by Nancy White Carlstrom. Aladdin, 1986.
- **Millions of Cats** by Wanda Gag. Putnam & Grosset, 1996.
- **In my Room** by Margaret Miller. Crowell, 1989.
- **Play Rhymes** by Marc Brown. Dutton, 1987.
- **Read Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young** by Jack Prelutsky (Ed.). A. Knopf, 1988.
- **Rosie's Walk** by Pat Hutchins. Aladdin, 1986.
- **Runaway Bunny** by Margaret Wise Brown. HarperCollins, 1991.
- **Ten, Nine, Eight** by Molly Bang. Tupelo, 1996.
- **Snowy Day** by Ezra Jack Keats. Viking, 1996.
- **We're Going on a Bear Hunt** by Michael Rosen. Aladdin, 1992.

Developing Readers: Pre-K Through First-Graders

Young children develop as readers as they begin to pay more attention to the print around them. They start to be able to recognize words and to read easy books with the support of adults and other children.

Preschoolers:

- Hold books correctly and turn the pages
- Are able to write some letters in their name
- Pretend to read their own "writing" and books
- May be able to show where to start reading a book
- Can tell the difference between pictures and print
- May know some letter names and can find them in a story
- Begin to read stop signs and business signs (McDonald's)
- Play with language through songs, chants, and invented words
- Can tell what a story is about and what they liked or disliked

Kindergartners:

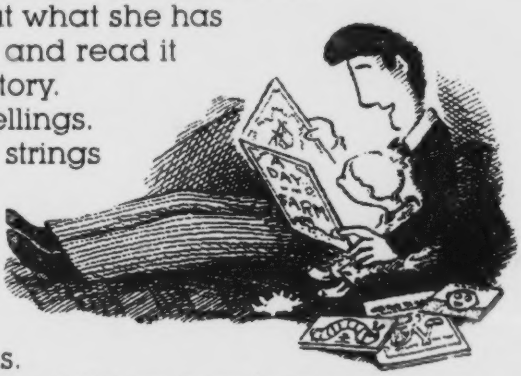
- Usually like books with talking animals, folktales, and some fairy tales
- May start to tell the difference between individual letters and words
- Recognize some letters of the alphabet; know sounds of some letters
- May be able to read and write their name and some familiar words
- Use illustrations to tell stories and can retell a story
- Participate in the reading of familiar books by supplying some words
- Usually can say words that rhyme and that start with a sound such as "t," "m," and "d"

First-graders:

- Recognize the letters of the alphabet and know most letter sounds
- Can write some familiar words from memory
- Are able to read "easy-to-read" books
- Enjoy fairy tales, and alphabet, counting, and informational books
- Write with invented spellings
- Use a variety of strategies when reading: letter sounds, context clues, illustrations, and sight words
- Will make predictions of what will happen next in a story
- Know the sequence of a story beginning, middle, and end
- Are able to retell a story and can tell the main idea

Things to do:

1. Read daily to your child—even if all you have is 10 minutes.
2. Reread stories and as your child gets to know the story pause and let her finish the sentence.
3. Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator and spell out words your child can copy like her name, "cat," "dog," "mom," and "dad."
4. Read alphabet books and then help your child make his own by cutting out and gluing magazine pictures to separate pages.
5. Have plenty of markers, crayons, pens, paper, and other materials on hand and encourage kids to make books, write, and draw.
6. Ask your child to tell you a story about what she has drawn. Write her words on the paper and read it back. Also, ask your child to retell a story.
7. Encourage children to invent word spellings. They may look like nothing more than strings of letters but this is how children connect sounds to letters, and is important for learning letter sounds.
8. Label furniture in your child's room. Ask your child to read words on billboards, cereal boxes, and signs.
9. Visit the library with your child weekly—children love having their own cards. Purchase used children's books from yard sales.
10. As your child begins reading aloud, let mistakes go as long as they don't change the meaning of the story. For example, if the sentence is, "She ran up the hill," and the child reads, "She is running up the hill," don't correct it. If she reads, "She rain up the hill," ask if it makes sense. When correcting, do it gently.


A DAY ON THE FARM

Some favorite books:

- **A, My Name is Alice** by Jane Bayer. Dial, 1984.
- **Amazing Grace** by Mary Hoffman. Dial, 1990.
- **Anno's Counting Book** by Mitsumasa Anno. Crowell, 1977.
- **Bread and Jam for Frances** by Russell Hoban. HarperCollins, 1993.
- **Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?** by Bill Martin, Jr. Holt, 1996.
- **Caps for Sale** by Esphyr Slobodkina. HarperCollins, 1947, 1985.
- **Chicka Chicka Boom Boom** by Bill Martin, Jr. Simon & Schuster, 1989.
- **Feelings** by Aliki. Greenwillow, 1984.
- **Frog and Toad Are Friends** by Arnold Lobel. HarperCollins, 1970.
- **Good Night, Owl!** by Pat Hutchins. Aladdin, 1991.
- **Ira Sleeps Over** by Bernard Waber. Houghton Mifflin, 1973.
- **Owen** by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow, 1993.
- **Song and Dance Man** by Karen Ackerman. Scholastic, 1989.

Transitional Readers: Second- and Third-Graders

Transitional readers are making the transition from needing a lot of adult support as they read to being independent as readers. They start to read easier texts on their own, and become increasingly more confident with more difficult books and chapter books.

Second-graders:

- Take pride in showing off their reading skills to grandparents, neighbors, and care providers
- Understand more difficult stories than they can read
- Are able to read early reader and "transitional" books, and may start reading chapter books
- Rely on print more than illustrations to make meaning of a text
- Use more and more ways to read, including sounding out using letter patterns, sight words, context clues, and illustrations
- Retell the beginning, middle, and end of a story
- Recognize most frequently read words and words by sight
- Are able to read silently
- Understand basic punctuation—capital letters, periods, and commas
- Can work out unknown words, reread, and self-correct
- Are able to talk about the main idea of story and relate personal experiences to it
- Begin to be interested in series books like *Goosebumps, The American Girl, Superfudge, Sweet Valley Girls,* and others

Third-graders:

- May choose to read independently and silently most of the time
- Use reading strategies appropriately and with ease
- Retell the plot, characters, and events from stories
- Recognize and choose different types of books: fiction, nonfiction, mystery, adventure, historical fiction, poetry, folktales, and so on
- Use encyclopedia, atlas, and computer resources to locate information
- Can read assignments and follow directions
- Are able to make predictions of what will happen in a story
- Make inferences or "read between the lines" in a story
- Write stories with a beginning, middle, and end

Things to do:

1. Follow your child's interests—if she loves sports, find fiction and nonfiction books that tie into this interest.
2. Have your child help you with recipes from cookbooks or mixes. Ask them to read ingredients, measure, mix, and clean up!
3. Help your child become a more fluent reader by having him read to younger brothers and sisters. This gives them practice and helps them share the fun of reading and books.
4. Get blank books—or make them. Kids should be encouraged to write down what they think and feel about books they read.
5. Make thank you notes, birthday cards, valentines, and invitations together. Use stamps, stickers, or cut-outs to decorate them and have your child write or copy the message.
6. Limit television viewing to shows the child selects from the listings. Try to use the "no more than 14 hours a week" rule in your house for TV and video games—use the extra time to read, talk together, or play games.
7. Play games that involve reading. Good choices are Monopoly, Concentration, Life, Careers, Risk, Clue, and many others.
8. At the grocery store let children find items on your list and cross them off. Have them find coupon items, read ingredients, and compare prices.
9. Play with words by rhyming, finding opposites, and naming synonyms or words that have similar meanings like hot and scorching. These types of activities give practice with thinking and vocabulary development.
10. Continue to read increasingly harder books aloud to your child.

Some favorite books:

- **A Chair for My Mother** by Vera B. Williams. Greenwillow, 1982.
- **Annie and the Old One** by Miska Miles. Atlantic Monthly, 1971.
- **Bunnicula: A Rabbit Tale of Mystery** by Deborah & James Howe. Atheneum, 1979.
- **Charlotte's Web** by E.B.White. HarperCollins, 1952.
- **Dr. De Soto** by William Steig. Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1982.
- **Little House in the Big Woods** by Laura Ingalls Wilder. HarperCollins, 1971.
- **Miss Rumphius** by Barbara Cooney. Viking, 1982.
- **Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale** by John Steptoe. Lothrop, 1987.
- **Officer Buckle and Gloria** by Peggy Rathman. Putnam's, 1995.
- **Owl Moon** by Jane Yolen. Philomel, 1987.
- **Wanted Dead or Alive: True Story of Harriet Tubman** by Ann McGovern. Scholastic, 1977.
- **Tar Beach** by Faith Ringgold. Scholastic, 1991.

Fluent Readers: Fourth- and Fifth-Graders

Fluent readers have learned how to read for a variety of purposes in their lives and can read independently most of the time. They tend to read and talk about things that relate to their personal lives and experiences.

Fourth-graders:

- Read familiar text with ease
- Can read and understand schedules; recipes, and instructions
- Read silently for extended periods of time
- See reading as a part of their everyday lives
- Can tell fact from opinion in what they read
- Use word structure clues like prefixes and suffixes to figure word meaning
- Can tell how different stories are similar
- Can write stories with a beginning, middle, and ending
- Build their reading vocabulary by using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources

Fifth-graders:

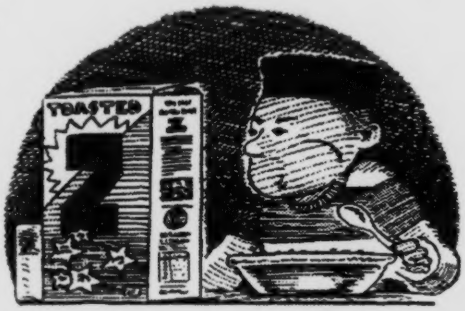
- Read to learn new information
- Begin to read young adult literature
- Use tables of contents, indexes, glossaries, and captions
- Can talk about and share favorite books and authors
- Select and finish reading a wide variety of materials
- Use reference materials independently
- Like adventures with real heroes and biographies about real people
- See reading as a part of their everyday lives
- Can connect previous experiences to new reading
- Choose to read as a leisure activity
- Respond and give insight to what is read; begin to find deeper meaning in books they read with some help

Things to do:

1. Keep reading aloud to your child (even if he can read alone) books that are longer and more difficult than he can read independently. Children still learn vocabulary and information about the world when books are read aloud—and it's a bonding experience.
2. If your child seems "turned off" to reading, seek out reading materials that are tuned into his interests. Don't forget books on tape and reading aloud are other ways to increase vocabulary and language skills.
3. Link movies and television shows to books. Limit TV viewing and video games to between 10 and 14 hours a week.
4. Encourage children to read more by letting them stay up 15-30 minutes later if they are reading.
5. Give a magazine subscription for a gift—each month it will keep giving.
6. Have your child prepare simple meals and dishes from recipes. This promotes reading skills and gives practice with measuring.
7. Help your child set a time and place for doing homework. A homework first, play later policy is a good way to ensure that learning is important.
8. Play games that involve reading and thinking about words. Get children interested in crossword puzzles.
9. Have kids read schedules for television, buses, trains, ferries, etc.
10. When you need to find a phone number, have your child use the phone book to look it up. Show how to locate a business number by its category or by its name.

Some favorite books:

- **Bridge to Terabithia** by Katherine Paterson. Crowell, 1977.
- **Harriet the Spy** by Louise Fitzhugh. Cornerstone, 1964, 1987.
- **Island of the Blue Dolphins** by Scott O'Dell. Houghton Mifflin, 1990.
- **James and the Giant Peach** by Roald Dahl. Knopf, 1990.
- **Julie of the Wolves** by Jean Craighead George. Puffin, 1976.



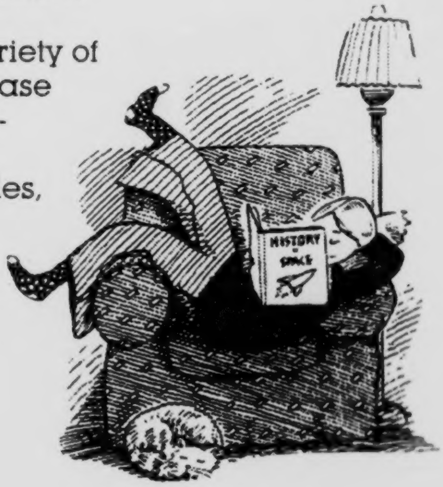
- **Maniac Magee** by Jerry Spinelli. Little, Brown, 1990.
- **Missing May** by Cynthia Rylant. Orchard, 1992.
- **My Side of the Mountain** by Jean Craighead George. Dutton, 1988.
- **Number the Stars** by Lois Lowry. Houghton Mifflin, 1989.
- **Owls in the Family** by Farley Mowat. McClelland & Stewart, 1989.
- **Sarah, Plain and Tall** by Patricia MacLachlan. Harper & Row, 1985.
- **Shiloh** by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Atheneum, 1991.
- **Stone Fox** by John Gardiner. Crowell, 1980.
- **Whipping Boy** by Sid Fleischman. Cornerstone, 1989.

Independent Readers: Sixth- Through Eighth-Graders

Children at this stage are fluent, independent readers who use reading as an important part of their everyday lives. They read for entertainment, information, and to learn.

Sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders:

- Begin to read more complex young adult literature, often enjoying survival and adventure stories focused on teenagers
- Can read different types of fiction and nonfiction, using appropriate reading strategies
- Use nonfiction information to develop a deeper understanding of a story
- Can interpret deeper meaning in young adult literature with guidance
- See reading as an important part of their everyday lives
- Can recognize bias and an author's purpose
- Make judgments and comparisons of what they read
- Use a variety of reference materials to research different topics
- Still enjoy being read to and discussing books
- Read newspapers for enjoyment and information
- Enjoy magazines in their interest area
- Voluntarily read and understand a wide variety of complex and sophisticated materials with ease
- Evaluate, interpret, and analyze literary elements critically
- Can use tables of contents, indexes, glossaries, and captions
- Follow detailed directions and instructions



Things to do:

1. Look closely at how time is being used in your home if your child is not reading regularly or enough. Being a good reader at this age means doing lots of reading outside of school.
2. Be clever about creating time for reading—allow a later bedtime or excuse children from a chore like washing dishes if he is reading.
3. Discuss bits and pieces of books that you read with your child. Find out about what she is reading by asking nonthreatening questions like, "What's happening in your book now?" or "What are the characters like in the book you are reading?"
4. Play games like Scrabble, Spill and Spell, Scattergories, and Balderdash together—they are fun and they reinforce reading skills.
5. Limit television viewing to 14 hours a week. Gradually reducing TV time can increase time for reading.
6. Make time for the library. Encourage your kids to find different types of books—nonfiction informational books, and poetry, history, travel, and cookbooks—at the library to increase awareness of topics and subjects.
7. Encourage children this age to read to younger children and siblings.
8. Give gifts that encourage reading and writing: reading lamps, magazine subscriptions, books, stationary, pens, and blank books.
9. Agree with your child on the time and place for homework. Make sure your child knows this is a high priority. If there are problems staying focused on homework, start a study group, get a tutor, or make a plan.
10. Be confident that it is worth the effort and your child's complaints to do all it takes to help your child be successful in reading and writing.

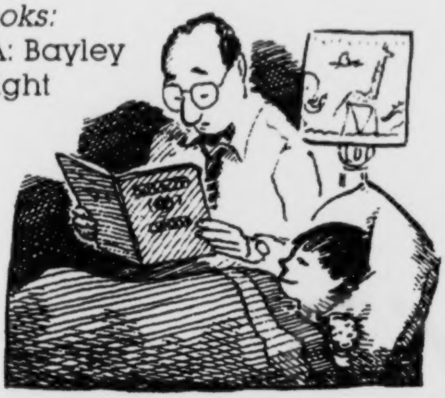
Some favorite books:

- **Catherine, Called Birdy** by Karen Cushman. Clarion, 1994.
- **Cry the Beloved Country** by Alan Paton. Scribner's, 1948, 1976.
- **Diary of Anne Frank** by Anne Frank. Longman, 1989.
- **Diary of Latoya Hunter: My First Year in Junior High** by Latoya Hunter. Crown, 1992.
- **Fade** by Robert Corimer. Delacorte, 1988.
- **Hatchet** by Gary Paulsen. Viking, 1987.
- **Homecoming** by Cynthia Voigt. Atheneum, 1981.
- **Lupita Manama** by Patricia Beatty. Morrow, 1981.
- **Misty of Chincoteague** by Marguerite Henry. Aladdin, 1991.
- **Morning Girl** by Michael Dorris. Hyperion, 1992.
- **North to Freedom** by Anne Holm. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990.
- **Thank You, Jackie Robinson** by Barbara Cohen. Beechtree Books, 1997.
- **The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm** by Nancy Farmer. Viking Penguin, 1994.
- **Wolf Rider** by Avi. Aladdin, 1993.
- **Wrinkle in Time** by Madeline L'Engle. Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1972.

Resources for Parents

Parents can access publications that highlight activities for families and give suggestions for helping children develop reading and writing skills. For those who are interested in reading more, the following books may be available in your local library:

- Calkins, L.M. (1997). *Raising lifelong learners.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Copperman, P. (1986). *Taking books to heart: How to develop a love of reading in your child.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Cullinan, B.E. (1992). *Read to me: Raising kids who love to read.* New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Freeman, J. (1995). *More books kids will sit still for: A read aloud guide.* New Providence, NJ: R.R. Bowker.
- Gross, J. (1986). *Make your child a lifelong reader: A parent-guided program for children of all ages who can't, won't or haven't yet started to read.* Los Angeles, CA: Jeremy P. Tarcher.
- Hearne, B. (1990). *Choosing books for children: A commonsense guide.* New York, NY: Dell Publishing.
- Hunt, G. (1989). *Honey for a child's heart: The imaginative use of books in family life.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.
- Hydrick, J. (1996). *Parent's guide to literacy for the 21st century.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Kimmel, M.M., & Segel, E. (1983). *For reading out loud! A guide to sharing books with children.* New York, NY: Delacorte Press.
- Kropp, P. (1993, 1996). *Raising a reader: Make your child a reader for life.* New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Lamme, L.L. (1995). *Growing up reading: Sharing with your children the joys of reading.* Washington, DC: Acropolis Books Ltd.
- O'Connor, K. (1995). *How to hook your kids on books: Create a love for reading that will last a lifetime.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- Trelease, J. (1995). *The read aloud handbook.* New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- White, V. (1994). *Choosing your children's books: Preparing readers 2-5 years old.* Atlanta, GA: Bayley & Musgrave. (Also for readers ages five to eight and eight to 12 years).



Books Used to Prepare this Publication

For ages and stages

- Commission on Student Learning. (1997). *Essential academic learning requirements.* Olympia, WA: Author.
- Cullinan, B.E. (1992). *Read to me: Raising kids who love to read.* New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Hill, B.C., & Ruptic, C. (1994). *Practical aspects of authentic assessment: Putting the pieces together.* Norwood,MA: Christopher Gordon.

Other materials we consulted

- Ammon, B.D., & Sherman, G.W. (1996). *Handbook for the 1997 young reader's choice award nominees.* Pocatello, ID: Beyond Basals, Inc.
- Braunger, J., & Lewis, J.P. (1997). *Building a knowledge base in reading.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory; Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English; & Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Calkins, L.M. (1997). *Raising lifelong learners.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Cotton, K. (in press). *Education for lifelong learning: Literature synthesis.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Cotton, K. (in press). *Lifelong learning skills for the preschool/kindergarten child: Tips for parents.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Cotton, K. (in press). *Lifelong learning skills for the elementary school child: Tips for parents.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Cotton, K. (in press). *Lifelong learning skills for the middle/junior high school student: Tips for parents.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Cotton, K. (in press). *Lifelong learning for the 21st century: Research highlights.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Davis, D. (in press). *Easy ways to help at home.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Glazer, S.M. (1990). *Creating readers and writers.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Huck, C.S., Hepler, S., Hickman, J., & Kiefer, B.Z. (1997). *Children's literature in the elementary school* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Brown & Benchmark.
- Shefelbine, J. (1991). *Encouraging your junior high student to read.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Glossary of Reading Terms

assessment: a way of looking at progress in formal and informal ways that may include observing students while they read, asking questions, and using different types of tests.

context clues: the words around an unknown word that allow a reader to figure out the meaning by its context.

decoding: analyzing or breaking apart a word to pronounce it and determine its meaning.

developmental stages: as children learn they go through different stages in their development that provide a foundation for the next stage.

guided reading: skills and strategies practiced in small groups where teachers can clearly see how well students are applying newly taught concepts and skills.

independent reading: reading practice by children in assigned or self-selected books on their own without teacher assistance.

invented spelling: a child's attempt to spell a word based upon the sounds he or she hears.

miscue: an error in oral reading. Miscues can show how the reader makes sense of a text and what strategies the reader is using. Errors can show strength in reading, for example, when a word is read incorrectly it may not affect the meaning—this shows that the reader is understanding what he is reading.

performance-based assessment: looking at how a student can use knowledge in real-life situations.

phoneme: a minimal sound unit of speech. When letters are blended such as "ch," "sh," or "ou," they are one sound.

phonemic awareness: awareness of the sounds phonemes make up in spoken words, for example, the sounds one hears in the word "phone" are F-long O-N.

phonics: the system in our language of letter-sound relationships, used especially in beginning instruction.

phonic generalizations: rules that help readers and writers with spelling and pronunciation, for example, the silent "e," "i" before "e" except after "c," or sounding like "a" as in neighbor and weigh. It is important to keep in mind that phonic generalizations are not true all the time—many of them work less than half the time!

portfolio: a purposeful collection of a student's work, chosen by both the student and the teacher to document and evaluate learning progress over time. A folder containing all student work is not considered a portfolio unless it is used as a way of showing growth on particular tasks.

prior knowledge: knowledge based upon previous experiences. When people read, their understanding is based on what they already know. For example, two adults may read the same novel set during the Civil War. One of the readers is very interested in the Civil War and has read other books about it and has visited the battlefields, and the other reader knows only what he can remember from his school days. The reader with the prior knowledge will probably be able to "get" more from the book.

process writing: a way of teaching writing that focuses on the steps involved in coming up with a finished written product. The steps include: prewriting, drafting, revising for content, editing for punctuation and spelling, and publishing or sharing it with others.

response: a written or spoken answer to a question about what is read. Many teachers ask students to use reading response journals to record their thinking about what is read.

running records: a method of gathering data about students' reading behaviors. It includes having the student read aloud while the teacher marks down mistakes or miscues. Running records show strengths and weaknesses in reading.

shared reading: a teacher's explicit model or instruction on how to read. This is done with the entire class using "big books," or can be done in smaller groups with regular-sized texts and independent reading when children practice reading in assigned or self-selected books.

sight words: words that are immediately recognized as a whole without any word analysis. The best words for beginning readers to learn by sight are those that don't follow any typical phonics rules such as "said," "gone," "was," and "have."

standards: expectations for all children. These are often stated as goals and are based on research of what children are capable of at different grade levels.

word recognition: quick and easy identification of a word previously met in print.

word analysis: identification or decoding of words readers don't immediately recognize.

More Books That Kids Love

Pre-K through first grade

- **Are You my Mother?** by P.D. Eastman. Random House, 1960.
- **My First Words: Me and my Clothes** by Margaret Miller. Crowell, 1989.
- **Pat the Bunny** by Dorothy Kunhardt. Western Pub, 1942.
- **Very Hungry Caterpillar** by Eric Carle. Philomel, 1994.
- **Time for Bed** by Mem Fox. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993.
- **What's Inside? The Alphabet Book** by Satoshi Kitamura. Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1985.
- **Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse** by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow, 1996.
- **Little Red Riding Hood** by Trina Schart Hyman. Holiday House, 1983.
- **Martha Blah Blah** by Susan Meddaugh. Houghton Mifflin, 1996.
- **Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel** by Virginia Lee Burton. Houghton Mifflin, 1967.
- **Millions of Cats** by Wanda Gag. Coward, Putnam, & Grosset, 1996.
- **Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born** by Jamie Lee Curtis. HarperCollins, 1996.
- **Doorbell Rang** by Pat Hutchins. Greenwillow, 1986.
- **Jolly Postman** by Janet & Allan Ahlberg. Little, Brown, 1986.
- **Napping House** by Don & Audrey Wood. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984.
- **Random House Book of Poetry for Children** by Jack Prelutksy (Ed.). Random, 1983.
- **Topsy Turvies** by Francesca Simon. Dial, 1996.
- **Tikki Tikki Tembo** by Arlene Mosel. Holt, 1989.
- **Tops and Bottoms** by Janet Stevens. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1995.
- **Tuesday** by David Weisner. Clarion, 1991.
- **When Birds Could Talk and Bats Could Sing** by Virginia Hamilton. Blue Sky, 1996.
- **Where the Wild Things Are** by Maurice Sendak. HarperFestival, 1992.
- **William's Doll** by Charlotte Zolotow. HarperTrophy, 1985.

Second and third grades

- **Baby Sister for Frances** by Russell Hoban. HarperCollins, 1993.
- **Dragon Naps** by Lynne Bertrand. Viking, 1996.
- **Leon and Bob** by Simon James. Candlewick Press, 1997.
- **Strega Nona** by Tomie dePaola. Simon & Schuster, 1975, 1988.
- **Best Christmas Pageant Ever** by Barbara Robinson. HarperTrophy, 1988.
- **Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe** by C.S. Lewis. HarperCollins, 1995.
- **Magic School Bus Inside the Earth** by Joanna Cole. Scholastic, 1987.
- **Secret Garden** by Francis Hodgson Burnett. Knopf, 1993.
- **Where Do You Think You're Going, Christopher Columbus?** by Jean Fritz. Putnam, 1980.

- **Where the Sidewalk Ends** by Shel Silverstein. HarperCollins, 1974.
- **When I Was Young in the Mountains** by Cynthia Rylant. E.P. Dutton, 1982.
- **Ramona Quimby, Age 8** by Beverly Cleary. Morrow, 1981.
- **Sam, Bangs, and Moonshine** by Evaline Ness. Holt, 1987.
- **Sylvester and the Magic Pebble** by William Steig. Windmill Books, 1969.
- **The Two of Them** by Aliki. William Morrow & Co, 1987.
- **The Paper Crane** by Molly Bang. William Morrow & Co, 1987.

Fourth and fifth grades

- **Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing** by Judy Blume. Cornerstone, 1987.
- **Book of Three** by Lloyd Alexander. Dell, 1964.
- **Chocolate War** by Robert Cormier. G.K. Hall, 1974, 1988.
- **Friendship** by Mildred Taylor. Dial, 1987.
- **Light in the Attic** by Shel Silverstein. HarperCollins, 1981.
- **Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang** by Mordecai Richler. Knopf, 1975.
- **Mr. Popper's Penguins** by Richard & Florence Atwater. Little, Brown, 1938, 1988.
- **Sing a Song of Popcorn: Every Child's Book of Poems** by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers (Ed.). Scholastic, 1988.
- **True Story of the Three Little Pigs by A. Wolf** by Jon Scieszka. Viking Kestrel, 1989.
- **What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?** by Jean Fritz. Coward, McCann, & Geoghegan, 1976.
- **Where the Red Fern Grows** by Wilson Rawls. ABC-CLIO, 1961, 1987.
- **Yang the Youngest and his Terrible Ear** by Lensey Namioka. Joy Street, 1992.
- **Yearling** by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. G.K. Hall, 1994.

Sixth through eighth grades

- **My Brother Sam is Dead** by James & Christopher Collier. Four Winds, 1985.
- **Dark is Rising** by Susan Cooper. Scholastic, 1989.
- **Ditchdigger's Daughter: A Black Family's Astonishing Success Story** by Yvonne S. Thornton. Dutton, 1995.
- **Fallen Angels** by Walter Dean Myer. Scholastic, 1988.
- **Interstellar Pig** by William Sleator. Dutton, 1984.
- **On my Honor** by Marion Dane Bauer. Clarion, 1986.
- **M.C. Higgins, the Great** by Virginia Hamilton. G.K. Hall, 1976.
- **Pinballs** by Betsy Byars. Harper & Row, 1987.
- **Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry** by Mildred Taylor. Bantam, 1989.
- **Space Station Seventh Grade** by Jerry Spinelli. Little, Brown, 1982.
- **Scorpions** by Walter Dean Myers. HarperTrophy, 1990.
- **Skinnybones** by Barbara Park. Bullseye, 1989.
- **Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes** by Chris Crutcher. Greenwillow, 1995.
- **Summer of my German Soldier** by Bette Greene. Cornerstone, 1973, 1989.

Reading Comprehension:
The Middle School Dilemma

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Comprehending is Problem-Solving: The Reader is in Charge

Drawing inferences from text. Proficient readers use their prior knowledge (schema) and textual information to draw conclusions, make critical judgments, and form unique interpretations from text. Inferences may occur in the form of conclusions, predictions, or new ideas (Anderson and Pearson, 1984).

Key Points:

- An inference is a new idea that happens when a reader thinks about something that is probably true about a book. The reader finds the truth through combining what she is reading and what she already knows.
- Proficient readers draw conclusions from text, make reasonable predictions as they read, test and revise them as they read further.
- Proficient readers make critical or analytical judgments about what they read.
- Students must connect with the meaning to make their own meaning.
- Students must connect with the meaning to make it stay in long term memory.
- Students who comprehend are learning something.
- Schema is one's view of the world; it is individual for each of us as we read something, it makes sense in a different way, based on our experiences.
- Scaffolding is bridging new material to what the student already knows. It is profoundly important to comprehension.

How do we do this effectively?

- Brainstorming a new topic together or individually to "activate schema."
- Predicting what the text will say (not what they already know) but it does come in to play.
- Evaluating our predictions later when we know more from reading.
- Reciprocal teaching (Palinscar, 1985) consists of the following steps and is very effective:
    1. Find two paragraphs of well-written text.
    2. Teacher models finding the "gist" of the material and stating it.
    3. Two questions are developed about the reading.
    4. New or difficult vocabulary is defined or emphasized.
    5. Predictions are made of what will come next.
    6. After teacher models this two or more times, student then leads group in the same process.
- Have students read text and stop them to ask them questions or what they have gained so far. Do this more than once in writings.
- Discuss types of questions: Literal (from the text) vs. Inferential (from your head).
- Allow students to read a variety of texts to make meaning for themselves, as much as possible.
- Writing as much as possible about personal meaning, opinions, questions, and ideas about the text.
- Multiple opportunities for graphic organizers, including story maps, two-column note taking, webbing, and charts, and semantic mapping.

Taffy Raphael (1985) Interacting with Text: Question/Answer Research

Information is in the book—right there.
Information is not in the story—reader needs to know something.
Information is in the story, but reader needs to put it all together.
Information is all in the reader's head—she doesn't even need to read the story.

The Student As Self-Informant; Does this Make Sense to Me?

Asking questions of themselves, the authors and the texts they read, proficient readers use their questions to clarify and to focus their reading.

Key Points:

- Proficient readers generate questions before, during, and after reading.
- Proficient readers ask questions to clarify meaning, speculate about text to be read, determine author's intent, style, content or format, and can locate a specific answer in text or consider questions inspired by text.
- Proficient readers ask questions of the text that may not be answered in it and may be answered by the individual reading.
- Proficient readers understand how questioning is useful in their lives and how it deepens their understanding.
- Proficient readers benefit from talking about their reading with others, questioning the author's point of view, and also have confidence in their understanding of text.

How do we do this effectively?

- Students have opportunities to talk about their reading with the class, peers, and with the teacher.
- Students are supported in their comprehension through reading to a teacher or a peer with a collaborative approach to meaning—with both parties offering ideas and perhaps, taking turns reading to the other.
- Provide support for questioning strategies including post it notes, coding, highlighting markers on copied text (on a regular basis if possible), double entry diaries, and Read Alouds which allow for stopping and sharing ideas from reading.
- Multiple opportunities to write about their reading, their questions, and their ideas.

The Multiple Intelligences, Remembering and Retaining!

Creating visual and other sensory images from text during and after reading. These images may include visual, auditory, and other sensory connections to the text. Proficient readers use these images to deepen their understanding of the text.

Interest and Motivation are Keys to Unlock the Comprehension Door

Activating relevant, prior knowledge (schema) before, during and after reading text. Proficient readers use prior knowledge to evaluate the adequacy of the model of meaning they have developed and to store newly learned information with other related memories (Pearson et al., 1992; Gordon & Pearson, 1983; Hansen, 1981)

Key Points:

- Proficient readers spontaneously and purposefully create mental images while and after they read. The images emerge from all five senses and the emotions and are anchored in a reader's prior knowledge. (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997)
- Proficient readers use images to immerse themselves in rich detail as they read which gives depth, and dimension to the reading, engaging the reader more deeply, making the text more memorable. (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997)
- Proficient readers use images to draw conclusions to create distinct and unique interpretations of the text, to recall details significant to the text and to recall a text after it has been read. Writing is closely aligned with this image-retention and making. (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997)
- Images are revised to incorporate new interpretations as they are developed by the reader and they adapt their images in response to the shared images of other readers.
- Different students utilize various senses (multiple intelligences) for leaming which requires opportunities for a variety of responses, including art, drama, and other modes.
- Learners make sense of the world by viewing things in their "mind's eye."
  Training students to make a mental image increases comprehension--dramatically.
- Proficient readers spontaneously and purposefully create mental images while and after they read.

How do we do this effectively?

- Activating the student's own experience by asking her to draw something the story or text made her think about.
- Creating scaffolds from the text to the student's experience. *Think of a time that you ate something frozen--why do things freeze?*
- Finding connections in poetry, art, drama to the readings. *The creative mind* now must find its voice.
- Using The National Geographic Magazine, The Smithsonian, or other secondary source materials to support concepts.
- Utilize every opportunity for students to draw their responses to the reading.
- Utilize journals for responding to the text; learning logs, specific subject matter joumals, or literature response groups.
- Teacher thinks aloud and models her process to students as she makes sense of text in her head.
- Personal stories and connections are consistently reinforced to individual meaning.
- Hear it, say it, write it, draw it, sing it, share it, and live it!

Tell me, in your own words, what you have learned or what the text said.

Retelling or synthesizing what they have read. Proficient readers attend to the most important information and to the clarity of the synthesis itself. Readers synthesize in order to better understand what they have read (Brown and Day, 1983).

Concepts, Reading and Remembering!

Determining the most important ideas and themes in a text (Afflerbach & Johnston, 1986; Baumann, 1986; Tierney & Cunningham, 1984; Winograd & Bridge, 1986). Proficient readers use their conclusions about important ideas to focus their reading and to exclude peripheral or unimportant details from memory.

Key Points:

- Proficient readers monitor the overall meaning of text as they read. They pay attention to the important concepts, themes in the text, and are aware of ways text elements fit together to create overall meaning and theme. (Zimmerman & Keene, 1997)
- Proficient readers are aware of text elements, genres and patterns of text (fiction and non-fiction) and realize that as they read they are able to predict and understand the overall meanings or themes. (Zimmerman & Keene 1997)
- Proficient readers attend more directly to character, setting, conflict, sequence of events, resolution, and theme in fiction and to text patterns such as description, chronological, cause and effect, comparison/contrast, and problem/solution in nonfiction. (Zimmerman & Keene, 1997)
- Meaning is constantly created by the good reader who rejects old notions based on new information as they read; they are motivated by intention to make meaning. (Smith, 1995)

How do we do this effectively?

- Students are given the "job" of making sense of text instead of teachers. Personal meaning is always emphasized and sought after.

- Students mark text with different codes (their own) for questions, disagreement, agreement, confused, etc. Talking in small groups about their readings is encouraged.

- Students keep metacognitive journals which allow them to monitor their own control of meaning. Students can write about their own reading instead of their learning.

- Strategies are discussed such as rereading text, asking questions, seeking more information, decoding text such as new vocabulary, critically analyzing the author's writing style, line of thinking, research, or organization.

Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (Russell Stauffer, 1969):

1. Reading actively by hypothesizing (predicting).
2. Collecting data (reading).
3. Reconsidering their original hypotheses (taking a second look at previous predictions

- Think alouds in partners by reading material orally and stopping when a thought comes into either the reader or the listener's head.

Say Something (Harste, Short & Burke, 1988) allows something to be read in a group and then each student must respond to the reading.

- Underlining, taking notes, and using a two-column note taking format (Concepts–Details).

- Summarizing can be modeled in a large group then in small groups. Utilize text of 150 to 1000 words, which allow for enough information to summarize.
  Look at the big picture rather than separate details or facts.

The Persistent Reader Retrieves Fix-Up Strategies from their own "File"

Utilizing a variety of fix-up strategies to repair comprehension when it breaks down. Proficient readers select appropriate fix-up strategies from one of the six language systems (pragmatic, schematic, semantic, syntactic, lexical, or grapho-phonic) to best solve a given problem in a given reading situation (I.e., skip ahead or reread, use the context and syntax, or sound it out) (Garner, 1987) in (Zimmerman & Keene, 1997)

Key Points:

- Proficient readers have a variety of strategies to unlock code and to gain meaning which are definitely problem solving tools. (Zimmerman & Keene, 1997)
- Proficient readers are adaptive, assess a comprehension problem quickly, then select the fix-up most likely to work effectively in that situation. (Zimmerman & Keene, 1997)
- Students utilize the following systems in order to gain meaning, sometimes in coordination with each other:
  - Grapho-phonic system: information about letters, features of letters, combinations of letters, and sounds associated with them.
  - Lexical or Orthographic system provides information about words including the automatic or instantaneous recognition of words, but not including the meaning associated with the word.
  - Syntactic system provides information about the form and the structure of the language, including whether or not the text sounds correct when pronounced.
  - Semantic system provides information about the generally accepted meaning(s) associated with words and longer pieces of text.
  - Schematic system provides information from a reader's prior knowledge and/or personal associations with text and the structure of text; also governs the grouping and organization of new information in memory stores.
  - Pragmatic system provides information about the purposes and the needs the reader has while reading; governs what the reader considers important and what she needs to understand.

How do we do this effectively?

- Students have opportunities to look at text that is challenging and deciding how meaning could be gained from it through the use of a variety of strategies.
- Strategies for making meaning include word analysis skills—what do you do when you come to a word you can't pronounce or understand? Syllabication, using context, activating personal background or schema, understanding deep and surface structure.
- Problem-solving skills are practiced, including defining the problem and persisting to find meaning. Confidence, a risk-free environment, sharing and honoring personal significance are all highly regarded in the classroom.
- Regular assessment of students in their oral reading and understanding of text is practiced and feedback is given. Various texts are assessed for meaning and development of strategies.

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Learning to Read and Write: A Place to Start

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Emergent Literacy

- Learning to read and write begins early in life and is ongoing.
- Learning to read and write is interrelated processes that develop in concert with oral language.
- Learning to read and write requires active participation that have *meaning* in the child's daily life.
- Learning to read and write involves interaction with *responsive* others.
- Learning to read and write is particularly enhanced by shared-book experiences (Dorothy Strickland, 1990).

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON READING AND WRITING

Oral Language

- Oral language provides the cornerstone of written language; speaking, listening, reading, and writing are all aspects of literacy and develop in an interdependent manner.
- Proficiency in oral language is strongly correlated with later reading proficiency (Cambourne, 1987; Cohen, 1968; Healy, 1990; Loban, 1963; Schickedanz, 1986; Strickland, 1990).
- Language develops through interactive engagements with responsive adults and peers (Bruner, 1986). The number of opportunities to engage in quality conversations has been identified as the most critical factor in young children's linguistic and cognitive development (Phillips, 1987). Children need to talk as well as to listen (Healy, 1990).

Dramatic Play

- Dramatic play supports cognitive and linguistic development by providing opportunities for symbolic manipulation and verbal reasoning, and supports social development through social interaction and opportunities for collaborative problem solving (Berk & Winsler, 1995).
- The fantasy and sociodramatic play of children can be viewed as a precursor to oral storytelling and story writing (Crowie, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978). Many children make up their first stories in the context of pretend play, creating and enacting their own dramatic narratives (and reenacting stories they have heard being read aloud) (McLane & McNamee, 1991).
- Dramatizing stories can help link children's love of pretend play to more formal storytelling (Paley, 1988, p. 91). Acting out storybooks, songs, poetry, and children's own dictated stories aids the development of narrative skills. These activities enhance overall intellectual performance and the generation of creative ideas, memory, and language competence, particularly the capacity to reason theoretically (Berk & Winsler, 1995).
- Both global and direct studies of the dramatic play/literacy connection have found that the social nature of play has a positive impact on measures of print knowledge, emergent story reading, and story recall (Rowe, 1998).

Reading Aloud

- The opportunity to listen to (and discuss) stories during the preschool and primary school years is strongly correlated with successful literacy development (Purcell-Gates, McIntyre, & Freppon, 1995; Riley, 1994; Schickedanz, 1986; Wells, 1986).
- Listening to and discussing stories benefit children's oral and written language development in many ways. These activities: build vocabulary and attention span; enhance memory, imagination, concept knowledge, and listening skills; help children think in more complex, abstract, and creative ways; broaden children's range of experience; help children learn the structure as well as the linguistic features of stories or narrative text; and aid phonological awareness through alliteration and rhyme (Dickenson & Smith, 1994; Purcell-Gates, 1988; Schickedanz, 1986; Wells, 1986).
- The familiarity that comes from repeated readings of books enables children to reenact stories and to "read" stories before they can decode many words. Repeated readings result in more interpretative responses and help children pay more attention to print and story structure (Martinez & Roser, 1985; Sulzby, 1985).

Comprehension

- The ultimate purpose of reading is comprehension (Stanovich & Stanovich, 1995). Comprehension is a complex process that involves knowledge, experience, thinking, and feeling (Fielding & Pearson, 1994).
- Comprehension involves the integration of new information with existing knowledge and understandings (Feitelson, Kita, & Goldstein, 1986). In order to make sense of what they read and what is read to them, children must see the connections between what they already know and what is read (Sweet, 1993).
- Comprehension is dependent on two kinds of prior knowledge—overall knowledge and knowledge of print. There is a strong statistical relationship between prior knowledge and reading-comprehension ability (Fielding & Pearson, 1994; Squire, 1983).
- Vocabulary knowledge is strongly correlated with reading skill. Readers acquire word meaning during reading by making inferences, using context and syntax (sentence structure). Consequently, good vocabulary programs must do more than establish an associational link between a word and its meaning through direct instruction; they must teach how to reason from language (Beck & Carpenter, 1986).
- Research has demonstrated a strong positive statistical relationship between the amount of time spent reading (and being read to) and reading comprehension, increases in vocabulary growth, and concept knowledge. The bulk of vocabulary growth occurs not via direct instruction but in the process of reading (Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988; Fielding & Pearson, 1994; Morrow, 1992; Stanovitch, 1986; Wells, 1986).

Engagement

- Engagement in the reading process is a critical factor in comprehension. In order for children to understand stories that they read or that are read to them, children must actively engage with the text. Understanding written text requires active and sustained work on connecting ideas (Healy, 1990).
- Csikszentmihalyi's (1975) theory of emergent motivation defines engagement as a balance between challenges and the ability to respond. Children should be given materials to read at their instructional level, neither so challenging that anxiety and frustration overwhelm their efforts nor so easy that nothing new is learned (Spiegel, 1995). However, most young children can *listen* to and *understand* complex story lines. Listening to stories at a level that is more advanced than a child's independent reading level encourages engagement and builds listening and comprehension skills.
- Because motivation to read is essential to engagement (Braunger & Lewis, 1997), learning to read and write requires active participation in activities that have meaning in the child's daily life (Strickland, 1990).
- The amount of time that children *choose* to spend reading is enhanced by a combination of opportunities for social interaction, an abundance of high-quality reading materials, allowing children to choose reading material of interest to them, and teacher emphasis on free reading (Morrow, 1992; Ng et al., 1996; Sweet, 1993).
- True engagement involves the ability to enter into the world of the story—to imagine a setting, to interpret a plot, to build relationships with characters, and to visualize or "see" what is being read. Readers who cannot visualize their reading are unlikely to want to read (Eisner, 1992; Enciso, 1992; Wilhelm, 1995). Asking children to create visual art as a response to reading and using picture books helps children to construct rich mental models as they read (Wilhelm, 1995).

- Students' participation, engagement, and involvement play a critical role in their decision to stay in school (Finn & Cox, 1992; Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesco, & Fernandez, 1989; Deyhle, 1992).

The Relationship Between Reading and Writing

- Research shows that when reading and writing are taught together, the benefits are greater than when they are taught separately. When children write words, they attend to the details of those words. As a result, writing leads to improved phonemic awareness and word recognition. Reading leads to better writing performance, and combined instruction leads to improvements in both areas (Pikulsky, 1994; Tierney & Shannahan, 1991).
- When reading and writing are taught together in the context of meaningful activities, children are required to use a higher level of thinking than when either process is taught alone (McGinley & Tierney, 1989).
- When children have opportunities to write their own stories, to read their own and others' stories, and to write in response to reading and art, they are able to employ much of their knowledge of reading in meaningful and purposeful ways (Braunger & Lewis, 1997).

Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Knowledge

- Phonemic awareness is not synonymous with phonics. Phonemic awareness is by definition an "ear" skill (Healy, 1990), an understanding of the structure of *spoken* language. In learning to read and write alphabetic language, phonemic awareness is a prerequisite for understanding that letters stand for the sounds in spoken words. Phonics knowledge is knowing the relationship between specific, printed letters (including combinations of letters) and specific, spoken sounds. Without phonemic awareness, children are unlikely to benefit from explicit phonics instruction (Juel, Griffith, & Gough, 1986).
- However, both phonemic awareness and phonics knowledge are enhanced by reading (and being read to), writing, and speaking. Children develop phonemic awareness as a result of the oral and written language they are exposed to during their preschool and primary school years. Books and songs with rhymes and alliteration, and language play such as pig Latin, play a large role in this development. Writing also plays a part. When children are allowed and encouraged to create spellings from their emerging understanding of sounds and print, phonemic awareness and understanding of the alphabetic principal is promoted (Adams, 1990; Cunningham & Allington, 1994; Schickedanz, 1986).
- While some children seem to learn to match print to sound "naturally," with little explicit instruction, many children need some explicit phonics instruction (Adams, 1990).
- By grade four, the relationship between phonics knowledge (alone) and successful reading no longer shows a strong correlation (Beck & Carpenter, 1986; Chall, 1983). Researchers hypothesize that as reading matter becomes more difficult, overall language skills relate more to reading than decoding ability (although decoding ability continues to play a crucial role) (Braunger & Lewis, 1997; Chall & Jacobs, 1983; Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990; Pearson, 1997). Many long-term studies show that children superior in oral language in kindergarten and first grade are the ones who eventually excel in reading and writing in the middle grades (Healy, 1990).

Benefits of Dramatic Play

- Dramatic play supports cognitive and linguistic development by providing opportunities for symbolic manipulation and verbal reasoning, and supports social development through social interaction and opportunities for collaborative problem solving (Berk & Winsler, 1995).

- The fantasy and sociodramatic play of children can be viewed as a precursor to oral storytelling and story writing (Crowie, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978). Many children make up their first stories in the context of pretend play, creating and enacting their own dramatic narratives (and reenacting stories they have heard being read aloud) (McLane & McNamee, 1991).

- Dramatizing stories can help link children's love of pretend play to more formal storytelling (Paley, 1988, p. 91). Acting out storybooks, songs, poetry, and children's own dictated stories aids the development of narrative skills. These activities enhance overall intellectual performance and the generation of creative ideas, memory, and language competence, particularly the capacity to reason theoretically (Berk & Winsler, 1995).

- Both global and direct studies of the dramatic play/literacy connection have found that the social nature of play has a positive impact on measures of print knowledge, emergent story reading, and story recall (Rowe, 1998).

BENEFITS OF STORY READING

It is the intimate sharing of a book between a child and a caring adult that helps the child grow to love and bond with books (Strickland & Morrow, 1989).

Families of children who read early and "naturally" typically provide a language-rich and "print-rich" environment that fosters the child's interest in literate activities. Books are everywhere and are frequently shared. Children's efforts at reading and writing are accepted with interest and enthusiasm and enhanced by adult questions and encouragement. Adults and older siblings frequently read to themselves and out loud to infants and children, demonstrating the importance of literacy, as well as its enjoyment.

Researchers have found that extensive story-reading experience during the preschool years is strongly correlated with successful literacy development during the elementary school years (Purcell-Gates, McIntyre, & Freppon, 1995; Schickedanz, 1986; Wells, 1986; Riley, 1994).

Schools and child-care programs can nurture children's emergent literacy by creating an environment similar to the homes of children who read early and who enjoy reading. Young children who listen to stories from the comfort and security of a caregiver's lap or in a cozy reading corner learn to listen and pay attention and have fun doing it (Healy, 1990); they develop a sense of rhythm and rhyme--abilities that are strongly correlated with learning to read.

Although we often think of "real school" as a place where formal, direct instruction takes place at set times during the day, it is the animated, informal, interactive experiences with reading that set the stage for young children to become active, motivated readers. Because the *amount of time* children *choose* to read and have *opportunities* to read are strongly correlated with reading proficiency, early positive experiences with reading play a critical role in helping children become successful readers.

While reading to toddlers is hardly a group activity, older preschoolers and primary-grade children are increasingly able to listen to stories in a group setting. Reading aloud to a group of children creates a community of readers through enjoyment and shared knowledge (Braunger & Lewis, 1997).

Sharing stories with young children helps build both physical and emotional closeness, and lays the foundation for a lifelong love of reading.

Listening to stories:

- Builds vocabulary and concept knowledge
- Aids development of sophisticated language structures
- Enhances:
    - Memory
    - Imagination
    - Attention span
    - Listening skills
- Helps children think in more complex, abstract, and creative ways
- Broadens children's range of experience
- Helps children learn the structure as well as the linguistic features of stories or narrative text
- Aids the development of phonemic awareness through rhyme and alliteration

Recent research has confirmed the importance of providing children with daily opportunities to experience literature in active and pleasurable ways. Morrow (1992) suggests these daily activities:

- Reading and telling stories to children
- Dealing with stories through literal, interpretative, and critical discussions
- Integrating literature into themes being studied throughout the curriculum
- Having children share books they have read
- Responding to literature through written and oral language
- Participating in independent (alone or with a "buddy") reading and writing periods (Morrow, 1992)

BRAIN FACTS

- Babies are born with 100 billion brain cells; however, only a relatively small number of neurons are connected. In the first decade of life, a child's brain forms trillions of connections.
- Research on brain development has provided physiological evidence that early experiences and interactions do not just create a context for early development and learning, they *directly* affect the way the brain is wired. In turn, this wiring profoundly affects emotional, language, and cognitive development.
    - Experiences do not just influence children's development, they allow the child to finish the work of building the unfinished brain that nature has provided. Fully three-quarters of the human brain develops outside the womb, in direct relationship with the physical and social environment (Shore, 1997).
- Brain development is especially rapid during the first year. Brain scans show that by the age of one, a baby's brain qualitatively resembles that of a normal young adult.
    - By age three, a baby's brain has formed about 1,000 trillion connections—about twice as many as adults have.
- The years between three and 10, described as "years of promise" by the 1996 Carnegie Task Force, are a time of rapid development of social, linguistic, cognitive, and physical competencies, corresponding with dramatic neurological changes (Carnegie Task Force, 1996).
    - Brain activity in children ages three to 10 is more than twice that of adults, and although new synapses continue to be formed throughout life, "never again will the brain be able to master new skills so readily or rebound from setbacks so easily" (Nash, 1997, p. 56).
- At age 11, the brain begins to prune extra connections at a rapid rate. The circuitry, or "wiring," that remains is more specific and efficient (Shore, 1997).
    - The brain has been called the ultimate example of the saying, "use it or lose it": connections that are used repeatedly in the early years become permanent; those that are not are eliminated.

Brain research helps us understand not only how and when the brain *develops* but also what kinds of experiences and environments *support* development:

- *Social relations are central to every aspect of a child's development.* Active and engaged care is essential for children's brain maturation and for social,

  - emotional, and intellectual development. For older children, caring adults are still vitally important. In addition, sharing ideas, experiences, and opinions with peers both challenges and expands children's thinking and builds social competence.
  - *Children learn best in a psychologically safe environment.* Brain research indicates that emotional intelligence is the bedrock upon which to build other intelligences, and that it is more closely linked to lifelong success than is IQ (Goleman, cited in O'Neil, 1996). Research has demonstrated that emotions can speed up or inhibit the thinking process. Under conditions of high stress, the brain goes into "survival mode"; higher order thinking is impeded.
  - Gunnar's (1996) research on cortisol, a hormone that is easily measured because it is present in saliva, helps to explain why stressful and/or abusive environments have an adverse effect on brain development. Adverse or traumatic events elevate the level of cortisol in the brain. Excessively and chronically high levels of cortisol alter the brain by making it vulnerable to processes that destroy brain cells responsible for thought and memory. Just as importantly, cortisol reduces the number of connections in certain parts of the brain.

- The brain is designed as a pattern detector; perceiving relationships and making connections are fundamental to the learning process (Caine & Caine, 1990). The brain resists learning isolated pieces of information, such as unconnected facts and words that don't make sense. Children (and adults) learn best when they can actively make sense of their experience.

- *Effective teaching builds on the experience and knowledge that children bring to school.* In order to make sense of their experiences, children need help to make connections between the known and unknown. For example, a child who has had little experience with storybooks but who loves to tell stories and engage in dramatic play can be encouraged to act out a story that is read aloud.

- *Effective teaching enables children to use all their senses and intelligences.* Music, drama, and arts instruction have been linked to higher achievement test scores and higher scores on tests of creative thinking, art appreciation, reading, vocabulary, and math (Rusch, 1998). It is important for children to be physically active in the classroom. Physical movement juices up the brain, feeding it nutrients in the form of glucose and increasing nerve connections—all of which make it easier for kids of all ages to learn (Hancock, 1996). Generally speaking, the younger the child, the more important it is for active engagement with materials, peers, and teachers in order for learning to take place.

Storybook Reading by Children Who Are Not Yet Reading and The Transition from Oral to Written Language

Research on storybook reading during the early years has identified a number of ways that reading aloud helps children to become motivated and competent readers and writers. Holdaway, who introduced "shared book" experience into school classrooms, describes the three phases of experience through which a favorite book passes in the bedtime story:

> First there is a successful introduction to the book for the purpose of enjoyment. There may be considerable participation and questioning by the child in a relaxed and un-pressured way. . . . Second, the child demands many repetitions over the next few days or weeks—the "read-it-again" phenomenon. . . . Third, the child spends many happy hours independently with the favorite book, role-playing as reader and recreating the familiar experience with increasing sophistication. (Park, 1982, p. 816).

Through repeated readings, and with the help of illustrations and their growing understanding that print makes sense, children develop their storybook-reading ability. Children who learn to read without formal instruction have often been described as teaching themselves to read from favorite storybooks. Long before they can actually read print, children often "read" the illustrations of a book or a memorized rhyme or story to themselves, parents, friends, pets, and stuffed animals. These reenactments model the adult's storybook reading and draw their attention to print. Hiebert observes, "When the information at the word level is not yet available to children, their text expectations draw their attention to individual words and support the development of an ever-expanding reading vocabulary" (p. 3).

Increasingly, researchers consider storybook reading by children who are not yet reading an important part of literacy development (Hiebert, 1997; MacGillivray, 1997; Sulzby, 1985). After reviewing the literature and listening to children from two- to five-years old read their favorite picture storybook, Sulzby (1985) developed broad categories for a classification scheme of patterns of young children's storybook-reading behaviors.

- Children's early attempts to read (when asked to read to an adult) are based on pictures, and stories are not yet formed. In this stage, children merely describe the pictures in a storybook without using book language.
- Next, children still rely on pictures, but stories are formed. These first story-reading attempts sound like oral language and may not closely follow the text.

- Before children can decode the printed word, their storytelling becomes increasingly like written language. They progress from treating individual pages of storybooks as if they are discrete units to treating the book as a unit.
- When children treat the book as a unit, they weave stories across the book's pages, progressing from a mixture of oral and written language-like reading, to "reading" that is quite similar to the original story.
- In these later stages, although the illustrations still may be needed to jog their memory of the story, children demonstrate that they are learning the structure as well as the linguistic features of stories by "talking like a book" (Clay, 1979). By now, children who have been read to frequently have developed a number of expectations about stories; first and foremost, they expect a story to make sense.
- Finally, children's attention begins to focus on print, as well as on illustrations. In the early stages of attending to the printed text, children may focus on a few known words, a few letters and associated sounds, or the remembered text (Sulzby, 1985). During these first stages of reading the printed word, children may use a number of strategies to keep stories meaningful, including reading word for word from a memorized or predictable book and telling stories from pictures when the print is too difficult to decode verbatim.

During a storybook reading, adults may ask children questions to assist problem solving, they may provide information (e.g., labeling objects), and they may read only part of a story while allowing the child to "read" the predictable text, such as a refrain of a song. By providing many relaxed, interactive experiences with reading and writing, children are helped to develop skills and strategies to understand written texts. In this way, children transition from *oral* language, which is face-to-face and interactive, to *written* language, which is more formal and lacks contextual cues, such as gestures and intonation.

Repeated readings. Both reading aloud and encouraging repeated readings of storybooks can be an important part of the curriculum in early childhood classrooms. Following story reading, just as in the homes of successful early readers, children should have opportunities to reread the books, poems, and songs independently. When enlarged texts are used, tape recordings of many selections should be available, and little books of the same title should always be available (Routman, 1994). Children who have had few prior book experiences, in particular, need numerous experiences with texts to focus on critical features and to remember them (Hiebert, 1997).

Morrow (1988) studied the effects of repeated readings of storybooks in school settings on children of lower socioeconomic status. These one-on-one story readings encouraged interaction between the teacher and child. She found that children in the repeated-book group had significantly more responses dealing with print and story structure, and more interpretative and predictive responses. Children with lower-ability skills, in particular, benefited from repeated readings.

Suggestions for Including Families and the Community in Literacy Activities

Children's own published books can include an "about the author" section and a comment page for parents and visitors to use in responding to the book. Children who have difficulty coming up with their own story can be encouraged to retell a traditional story, such as Thumbelina, or to create an innovation of a familiar story, such as Red Dear, Red Dear. These books can then go home with children and be shared with family members (Cherry Valley Elementary School, Polson, Montana).

Traveling books. Written as a group, with each child contributing a page on a shared topic, these books offer opportunities for families to see the progress of all the children in the class, as well as their own child. Doug Crosby of Cherry Valley Elementary School in Polson, Montana, comments:

> Think about a worksheet—it might take 10 or 15 minutes to fill out a worksheet and it will bet thrown away or hung on the fridge. Take a traveling book. It might take an hour to make it. Each child might read it with their mom and dad for 10 minutes. It comes back to the classroom, becomes part of the classroom library and is read during the day and, at the end of the year, becomes part of the school library. How many hours of reading and enjoyment is that book giving to kids?

Including the larger community. At Cherry Valley Elementary School, parents regularly bring children's published books to Polson's doctors' and dentists' offices. Now, along with copies of *Field and Stream* and parenting magazines, local residents can not only read the latest student works, but they can also sign their name and write responses to the book on the comment page.

Authors' parties. Families and friends are invited to listen to their child read his or her own individually written and illustrated books, make comments in the comment section, and then move on to another child.

Floppy Rabbit's Journal. Each night, a stuffed rabbit named Floppy goes home with a different child, armed with a reading bag that contains a draft writing book, a journal, and colored pencils. On the first page, "Welcome to Floppy Rabbit's Journal," it is explained to parents that because "Floppy is not too good at writing yet," it is up to the person who takes Floppy home to confer with parents to correct spelling and punctuation, and to "help it make sense." Then the adventure is written into Floppy's journal, accompanied by a colored picture. In addition, parents are encouraged to write their own version of Floppy's stay, so children can see that their parents also like to write (Cherry Valley Elementary School, Polson, Montana).

The Writer's Briefcase. Filled with paper, blank books, stapler and staples, crayons, markers, pens, pencils, stencils, envelopes, clipboard, scissors, pencil sharpener, paper clips, paper fasteners, a variety of stickers and gummed labels, and an article for parents explaining the reading/writing process you use in your classroom, this briefcase can be taken home by a different child every night.

Student-made school and/or class newsletters. These help keep parents informed and included.

Book in a bag. Children take home a book in a bag for home reading with family members. Adding both a comment section and a "tips for parents and caregivers" section encourages active family involvement.

Literacy fairs. Literacy fairs are a great way to celebrate literacy accomplishments and educate the community about your approach to literacy instruction.

Family stories. Family stories are narratives in which the youngster or other relatives are the featured characters in simple home adventures of days gone by (Buchoff, 1995). Buchoff writes, "Every family has its own unique body of stories that can be transmitted to the children of the family through the pleasure of story telling. Since it is often difficult for adults to recollect a special memory or specific anecdote on the spur of the moment, it can be quite helpful when children are provided with a list of "Tell me about" prompts. Examples of such prompts might include: "Tell me about something I did when I was little" or "Tell me about when you got lost on the mountain." Young children can record their stories on audiotape or videotape and the teacher can transcribe them, or children can dictate the stories to an adult or older child. Children can also illustrate their stories and act them out.

Intergenerational relationships. Establishing a relationship with residents at a local nursing home can benefit all concerned. At Cherry Valley Elementary School, children, both in multiage groups and with their classrooms, have been visiting a local nursing home and establishing a relationship with one or more residents. Children then interview the residents, who frequently tell stories about their lives. Young children may simply remember as much as they can, while older children take notes. They then write the stories, publish them, and take them back to the nursing home, where they read to the elderly residents.

The Mom and Dad Book. Jennifer deGroot-Knegt, child-care director at Kente Kinder Centre in Ontario, Canada, offers this suggestion: "We ask children to bring pictures of parents, grandparents, or other caregivers to make a cooperative class book. One page is allotted for each child. We ask children to dictate stories about what their parents do and what they like them to do with them. Children also illustrate their stories. It is wonderful to read through when they are missing their parents throughout the day. These books can also be checked out and taken home by children."

Bulletin board. Make a special bulletin board for displaying drawings and writing by children about their families and *invite* children to contribute. So that children aren't pressured to participate, this activity should not be required (Sydney Gewurtz-Clemens, author and teacher).

Meet the teacher day. On an early childhood listserv, a child-care director suggested: "To help get to know each other, we send a bag home with families who attend 'Meet the Teacher Day.' We ask the students to put five things they like in the bag or five things about themselves or their families. Attach a note to each bag to welcome the student and explain the purpose of the bag. Put together a bag for yourself that goes home with the children's bags. If a child misses the meeting, we send the bag in the mail. Each child then brings the bag to the first day of school."

Family banner. At a child-care center, teachers supply a kit for each child to take home to make a family banner. The kits contain fabric, glue, scissors, markers, and other materials, at a cost of about $1. Each family designs their own banner, which is displayed throughout the year, hanging from the ceiling. They then display the banners at a family picnic in a nearby park.

Supporting multicultural awareness. In a recent workshop, teachers in a migrant-education program were discussing how difficult it was when Mexican families often planned a return to Mexico to visit relatives during the middle of the school year, "just when the students are finally learning to read." Because when the children return they frequently have not maintained their literacy skills and have to "start all over again," some teachers had been trying unsuccessfully to persuade families to postpone their trips home until summer (at the height of the harvest season) or even not to go at all.

One teacher, however, reported that her school staff had struggled with this issue, but "since visiting family was a vital part of the Latino culture that was unlikely to change," they had come up with a plan that benefited all concerned. An investment in inexpensive instant cameras for the children to take to Mexico, with instructions to "take pictures of all your relatives and write a story about each one to share with the class," enabled the children to use their literacy skills in a way that connected their families and culture to a meaningful learning experience that enriched the entire class. Some mothers also organized a workshop where they hand-stitched covers for the cameras and taught their skill to other parents.

Research on How Children Acquire Phonics Knowledge

- Most young children have difficulty analyzing words into separate sounds, for example, separating "cat" into its three letters and corresponding sounds. This is because phonemes are not discrete units. The attributes of a phoneme spill over into those that come before it and follow it in a word (Adams, 1990; Gunning, 1988; Treiman, 1985).
- Children become sensitive to rhyme at an early age. Bryant et al. (1989) showed that nursery rhyme knowledge at three years was related to reading ability at six years even after differences in social background and IQ were taken into account.
- Goswami and Bryant (1990) suggested that the linguistic units *onset* and *rime* may be crucial in explaining the robust link between rhyming and reading. *Onset* is the initial consonant or consonant clusters, and *rime* is the vowel of a syllable plus any consonants that might follow. For example, in the word "cat," *c* is the onset and *at* is the rime; in the word "splat," *spl* is the onset and *at* is the rime.
- Wise et al. (1990) found that first-grade readers who learned to read words by segmenting them into onset and rime subunits remembered how to read the words better than readers who segmented the words into other units.
- Children who recognize onsets and rimes can learn to make *analogies* between spelling patterns in words to help them read new words. For example, a child who can read *table* can more easily learn to read *stable*, *cable*, *gable*, and *fable*. Adams (1990) concluded that an analogy approach is not only a strategy used by skilled readers but also an effective method for teaching students to decode.
- In several studies, Goswami (1986; 1990) found that reading words by analogy develops earlier than reading words by sequential (letter-by-letter) decoding.
- The more print words children recognize, the better children are able to make analogies between letter strings representing onsets and rime (Ehri & Robbins, 1992).
- The ability to make analogies (e.g., from cat to mat, smile to vile, table to stable, and beak to peak) eliminates the need for the child to blend phonemes in the rimes of new words because the blended rimes are supplied by the reader's memory for the known words. Because blending is known to be a difficult operation, this ability leads to more efficient word recognition (Ehri & Robins, 1992).

Based on these findings, focusing on onsets and rimes can help children develop phonemic awareness and learn to make analogies between spelling patterns in words to help them read new words. At the same time, in order to divide words into onsets and rimes, children are learning to understand how letters symbolize sounds and how to blend parts of known words with parts of new words (Erhi and Robbins, 1992). For example, a child who can read cat, can more easily learn to read bat, sat, mat, pat, and that.

Summary of Strategies to Develop Decoding Skills

There are a number of ways that teachers can directly help children develop phonics knowledge that they can use in reading and writing. In *Creating Support for Effective Literacy Education*, Weaver, Gillmeister-Krause, and Vento-Zogby (1996) offer these suggestions:

- Read and reread favorite nursery rhymes to reinforce the sound patterns of the language, and enjoy tongue-twisters and other forms of language play together.
- Read aloud to children from Big Books or charts large enough for all children in the group or class to see the print easily. Run a pointer or your hand or finger under the words, to help children make the association between spoken words and written words.
- Part of the time, choose Big Books and/or make charts of stories, poems, and rhymes that make interesting use of alliteration, rhyme, and onomatopoeia.
- When sharing Big Books or charts, focus children's attention on the beginnings and ends of words. It is helpful to focus on elements that alliterate and rhyme, before focusing on individual sounds.
- The most effective and efficient phonics instruction focuses children's attention on noticing onsets and rimes. Onset is the initial consonant or consonant clusters, and rime is the vowel of a syllable plus any consonants that might follow. For example, in the word "cat," c is the onset and at is the rime; in the word "splat," spl is the onset and at is the rime.
- During the discussion of onsets and/or rimes, you and the children can make charts of words with the same sound pattern (to help children use analogies to read new words).
- Read alphabet books with children, and make alphabet books together.
- Read with children other books that emphasize sound—books such as *Noisy Poems* edited by Jill Bennett, *Deep Down Underground* by Oliver Dunrea, and Dr. Seuss books. Comment on sounds.
- When reading together, help children use prior knowledge and context plus initial consonants to predict what a word will be; then look at the rest of the word to confirm or correct.
- Talk about letters and sounds as you write messages to children and as you help them compose something together or individually. This is a very

important way of helping children begin to hear individual sounds in words as well as to learn to spell some of the words they write.

- Help children notice print in their environment—signs, labels, and other print.
- When children demonstrate in their attempts at writing that they realize letters represent sounds, help them individually to write the sounds they hear in words
- Provide tape recordings of many selections for children to listen to as they follow along with the written text. It helps to provide small copies of the text, not just a Big Book or chart.

What Children Can Do When They're Stuck on a Word

- Look at the picture and the first letter of the word.
- Look for a known chunk or small word (e.g., *child* in children).
- Read the word using only the beginning and ending sounds.
- Think of a word that looks like the difficult word (e.g., if the word is "bat," think of a word that looks like this word, only with a different first letter).
- Find the small word in the big word (e.g., bathroom).
- Find the ending or beginning of a word in the main word (e.g., play*ing*; *re*pay).
- Skip the word and read to the end of the sentence.
- Go back to the beginning of sentence and try again.
- Substitute a word that makes sense. Think about the story, does the word you are using make sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right?
- Link to prior knowledge.
- Predict and anticipate what could come next.
- Read the passage several times for fluency and meaning.
- Write words you can't figure out and need to know on Post-its.
- Read the word without the vowels.

Handout 10

Highlights of Research on Resiliency

The concepts of resilience and protective factors are the positive counterparts to the constructs of vulnerability and risk factors (Werner & Smith, 1992). Resilient children, called "keepers of the dream" by Germezy, Masten, and Tellegsan (1984), are children who remain competent despite exposure to misfortune or to stressful events (Rutter, 1985). Characteristics of resilient children include (Demos, 1989):

- A sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy, which allows the child to cope successfully with challenges
- An active stance toward an obstacle or difficulty
- The ability to see a difficulty as a problem that can be worked on, overcome, changed, endured, or resolved in some way
- Reasonable persistence, with an ability to know when "enough is enough"
- A capacity to develop a range of strategies and skills to bear on the problem, which can be used in a flexible way.

No children, however, are invulnerable to the stress of diversity (Rutter, 1985):

- The resistance to stress is relative.
- The basis of the resistance is both environmental and constitutional.
- The degree of resistance is not a fixed quantity; it varies over time and according to circumstances.
- Risk increases substantially when children experience two risk factors and continues to increase as the number of risk factors increases (Rutter, 1985). The more risk factors are present, the greater the damaging impact of each.
- Poverty is usually not one risk factor; rather it is a constellation of interacting risk factors (Schorr, 1987).

In a longitudinal study of a multiracial cohort of 698 infants on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, Werner and Smith (1992) identified children who, despite multiple risk factors, were able to lead productive lives, exhibiting competence, confidence, and caring. One of the key protective factors for these children was the availability of persons who provided them with a secure base for the development of trust, autonomy, and initiative. Among the most frequently encountered positive role models in the lives of the children of Kauai, outside of the family circle, was a favorite teacher. For the resilient youngsters, a special teacher was not just an instructor for academic skills, but also a confidant and positive model for personal identification.

To Sum Up

There are many paths to literacy. Conversations, poetry, pretend play, painting and drawing, story telling, story dramatization, looking at pictures, a print-rich environment, and reading stories all lead a child into literacy.

- Oral language development is nurtured through meaningful conversations with adults and peers, and through singing, dramatic play, and many opportunities to tell stories and to listen to and respond to stories told and read by adults
- Phonemic awareness (awareness of the separate sounds in words) is encouraged through reading and rereading nursery rhymes, singing songs with rhyme and alliteration, enjoying tongue-twisters and other forms of language play (such as Pig Latin), encouraging the use of developmental spelling, and by drawing children's attention to letter/sound patterns in familiar words.
- Print awareness (the awareness that print makes sense) is enhanced by creating an environment rich in print of all kinds, and with many opportunities for using and seeing print used in functional and creative ways

But, as Patsy Cooper (1993) points out, a child's relationship to stories should be distinguished from “print awareness”: “*Relationships* to both stories and writing extend this cognitive awareness of print to include an engagement of the heart as well as the mind” (p. 11). A love of stories and writing is nurtured by responsive, caring adults who, in literacy expert Frank Smith's (1985) words, *invite* children into the ‘literacy club.’” By integrating literacy—oral, written, and aesthetic—into the everyday lives of young children, literacy becomes meaningful, relevant, and powerful.

The Traits of an Effective Reader: A Framework for Addressing State Standards in Reading

Dr. Lesley Thompson
Assessment and Evaluation
NWREL

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

The Traits of an Effective Reader: An Overview

- Readers are assessed across six areas of performance:

    1) Decoding Conventions
    2) Establishing Comprehension
    3) Realizing Context
    4) Developing Interpretations
    5) Integrating for Synthesis
    6) Critiquing for Evaluation

- Readers are assessed and given feedback for both strength and challenge areas in reading achievement

- Readers see their reading achievement along a continuum of development where success is clearly targeted

- By invoking the language of the reading traits, readers have a powerful common language to express their reading understanding

- Readers move from a passive reading experience to an active reading experience through the validation of their individual Responses

- Teachers, students, and parents have a powerful way of talking about linking reading and critical thinking together

- Readers move from "reading the lines" to "reading Between the lines" to "reading beyond the lines"

"Reading and writing are both acts of composing. Readers, using their background of knowledge and experience, compose meaning from the text: writers, using their background of knowledge and experience, compose meaning into text".
--Jan Turbill, *Towards a Reading—Writing Classroom*

"Readers who regard themselves as writiers will read differently from those who do not write. As you read, you will not only appreciate the conventions and elements of style used by other writers but you will actively seek to learn from them. Furthermore, comprehension is greatly enhanced. Not only do you read for meaning, you see beyond that and "befriend the author". It is as if you step into the author's shoes as you read.
--Andrea Butler, *Towards a Reading—Writing classroom*

The students who come to us now exist in the most manipulative culture human beings have ever experienced. They are bombarded with signs, with rhetoric, from their daily awakenings until their troubled sleep, especially with signs transmitted by the audio-visual media. And, for a variety of reasons, they are relatively deprived of experience in the thoughtful reading and writing of verbal texts. They are also sadly deficient in certain kinds of historical knowledge that might give them some perspective on the manipulation that they currently encounter. What students need from us is the kind of knowledge and skill that will enable them to make sense of their worlds, to determine their own interests, both individual and collective, to see through the manipulations of all sorts of texts in all sorts of media, and to express their own views in some appropriate manner. --Robert Scholes, *Textual Power*

To put it as directly, and perhaps as brutally as possible, we must stop "teaching literature " and start "studying texts". Our rebuilt apparatus must be devoted to textual studies, with the consumption and production of texts thoroughly intermingled.
--Robert Scholes. *Textual Power*

Interpretations are an activity dependent upon the failures of reading. It is the feeling of incompleteness on the reader's part that activates the interpretative process.
--Robert Scholes, *Textual Power*

In reading we produce text within text, in interpretation we produce text upon text and in criticizing we produce text against text.

Cultural codes enable us to process verbal material to construct a fictional world to orient ourselves in it, to locate and understand the characters, their situations, and their actions. The more culturally at home in a text our students become, the less dependent they will be on guidance from the instructor. I hate to say it, but I must observe that one of the reasons we teachers favor the big anthology is that it keeps our students dependent upon us, justifying our existence. --Robert Scholes, *Textual Power*

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Reading—as a submission to the intentions of another—is the first step in all thought and communication. It is essential, but it is incomplete in itself. It requires both interpretation and criticism for completion. --Robert Scholes, *Textual Power*

We often assume that the development of a curriculum is an innocent occupation, for which we need accept no personal responsibility. The "masterpieces" are there, so we teach them. They have been pre-selected by culture, laid down like fossils in the sediment layers of institutional tradition. Our only duty is to make them relevant, to make Shakespeare "our contemporary". It is much more important, I should think to try making ourselves Shakespeare's contemporaries, for a while, if only because it is a better exercise for the critical imagination or, more importantly, because without such attempts we lose history and become the pawns of tradition. The curriculum must be subject to critical scrutiny like everything else in our academic institutions. Its very "naturalness", its apparent inevitability, makes it especially suspect.

--Robert Scholes, *Textual Power*

The world resists language as the grain of tree resists the saw, and saws take the form they do partly because wood is what it is. We sense the presence of things through this resistance. Human beings become human beings through the acquisition of language, and this acquisition alienates humans from all of those things that language names. The name is a substitute for the thing; it displaces the thing in the very act of naming it.

--Robert Scholes, *Textual Power*

An English teacher came up to speak to me after a talk a few years ago. She looked worried, anxious, as if she had some bad news. I smiled and prepared myself.

"I was in my department chairperson's office, " she began, "when I saw one of your books on his desk, but he had taped over your name and put his name on the book. I was shocked, "she continued, and asked him what he meant doing that. He answered, "When you read one of Murray's books you make it your own". I thought it was the best compliment this writer has ever received. When we read a good book, we bring ourselves to its reading and collaborate with the author to create an individual text that is partly the writer's and partly the reader's. We too often forget that reading as well as writing can e a creative act.

--Donald Murray, *Read to Write*

The educator (who helps learners arrive at a more and more critical view of their reality) is a knowing subject, face to face with other knowing subjects. He can never be a mere memorizer, but a person constantly readjusting his knowledge, who calls forth knowledge from his students. For him, education is a pedagogy of knowing.

--Paulo Feire. "The Adult Literacy Process
as a Cultural Action for Freedom"

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The Traits of an Effective Reader

Decoding Conventions:

Decoding words
Decoding symbols
Decoding grammar and punctuation
Reading aloud with sentence fluency
Recognizing genre and mode
Oral fluency enhances meaning of text

Establishing Comprehension:

Establishing plot
Selecting main ideas
Distinguishing between major and minor characters
Distinguishing between significant and supporting details
Describing turning moments, conflicts, resolutions
Creating a purposeful summary

Realizing Context:

Finding vocabulary reflective of the text
Describing setting
Describing historical time period
Finding evidence of social issues
Realizing cultural overtones

Developing Interpretations:

Locating problems, ambiguities and gaps in texts
Selecting clues and evidence to analyze problems
Revising interpretations with new information
Connecting interpretations to a bigger picture

Integrating for Synthesis:

Put information in order
List, sort, and outline information
Compare and contrast
Cause and effect
Compare to personal background experience
Use multiple sources to create an "integrated" analysis

Critiquing for Evaluation:

Experimenting with ideas
Expressing opinions
Raising questions
Challenging the text
Challenging the author
Noting bias and distortion
Noting bias and distortion
Distinguishing between fact and opinion

A Reading Assessment Continuum

An Advanced Reader:

Understands and interprets thoroughly
Makes thoughtful connections
Extends meaning into other texts, experiences,
Creates layers of understanding
Questions the authority of the text
Suggests alternative interpretations

A Developing Reader:

Adequately understands the text
Knows the relationships of the parts
but not the whole
References are still general rather than
precise, ordinary rather than unique
Exhibits some risk-taking

An Emerging Reader:

Constructs an initial understanding of the text
Understands discrete parts of the text or
focuses solely on one aspect
Is ready to begin risk-taking

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QUESTIONS A READER SHOULD ASK...

DECODING CONVENTIONS...what kind of a text is this?

ESTABLISHING COMPREHENSION...what is this text about?

REALIZING CONTEXT...what is the context for this text?

DEVELOPING INTERPRETATONS...what questions do I have for this text?

INTEGRATING FOR SYNTHESIS...what else can I compare this text to?

CRITIQUING FOR EVALUATION...what did this text make me think about?

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STUDENT FRIENDLY READING TRAITS

- I recognize conventions in texts and read them with purpose and expression in my voice.
- I use my words to paint a picture of a text when I practice a comprehension.
- I put myself in the author's shoes when I read for context.
- I make good guesses, fill in the gaps, and solve problems through predictions when I interpret texts.
- I put things in order, compare and contrast, and determine what happens and why when I synthesize texts.
- I make good judgements, think thoughtfully and even question the author when I evaluate texts.

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READER—TEXT—ASSESSMENT RELATIONSHIP

READER (What the Reader does)	**TEXT** (What the text provides)	**ASSESSMENT** (How we know if the reader is successful)
Readers notice devices to Decode conventions	Conventions	Reader can recognize conventions and Use them to enhance meaning Acquisition
Readers use context to Make meaning	Comprehension	Reader can show understanding of the Content and purpose
Readers make inferences To realize context	Context	Reader can make inferences about the Context and connect it to a bigger picture
Readers ask questions to Interpret	Interpretation	Reader can explain textual problems And resolve them with textual evidence
Readers make Comparisons to synthesize	Synthesis	Reader can integrate sources and Combine information for application
Readers make judgments To evaluate	Evaluation	Reader can appraise texts' Effectiveness and quality thoughtfully And thoroughly

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How to design "reading prompts" that enable students to clarify and present their best critical reading skills….

Designing "good" prompts for open-ended reading questions is one of the hardest job of the reading teacher. When you create questions, you intuitively know what a great answer would look like—why not? You wrote the question! But, to enable our students to be as successful as possible, we need to provide them with a framework for understanding what the question is actually asking. That's why a familiarity with reading prompt language and an understanding of the "thinking skills" required by different types of questions can assist students to getting to the "root" of the question before they even begin to formulate their answer. Here's some "prompt" language that matches the criteria of the "Traits of an Effective Reader" with the kinds of thinking skills students use:

In decoding conventions, you want students to be able to recognize the writing, organizational and genre conventions of text. So, you want to begin your prompts with this type of terminology:

Decode, Demonstrate, Identify, Clarify, Specify, Name, Recognize:

In establishing comprehension, you want students to be able to create a purposeful and organized understanding of a text. So, you want to begin your prompts with this type of terminology:

What, Explain, Examine, Identify, State, Establish, Describe:

In realizing context, you want students to be able to infer the contextual elements of tone, author's purpose, setting, and social and cultural issues. So, you want to begin your prompts with this type of terminology:

When, Where, Distinguish, Illustrate, Infer, Design:

In developing interpretation, you want students to be able to identify problems in texts and resolve them using clues and evidence. So, you want to begin your prompts with this type of terminology:

Why, Interpret, Analyze, Generate, Hypothesize, Problem-Solve, Find Solutions Pose, Zero in, Cite

In integrating for synthesis, you want students to be able to connect textual material with other texts, subjects, and experiences. So, you want to begin your prompts with this type of Terminology:

Synthesize, Connect, Integrate, Compare, Contrast, Outline, List, Sort, How, Apply, Categorize:

In critiquing for evaluation you want students to be able to critique textual material, ideas, and perspectives with insight and evidence. So, you want to begin your prompts with this type of terminology:

Evaluate, Experiment, Express, Raise Questions, Challenge, Defend, Assess, Query, Conjecture, Draw Conclusions, Justify, State Obstacles, Find Alternatives:

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR HELPING STUDENTS THINK ABOUT READING…

Opened-Ended Questions require the most "work" by the student: "What kind of a text is this?" ***Students learn to "frame" their answers and provide as specific as information as possible.***

Guided Questions require equal "work" by the teacher and the student: "We have talked about two types of stories, fables and fairy tales, can you tell me which kind of story this is?" ***Students learn to take "cues" from the "guidance" provided in the question. They use the information to help them build a "frame" and choose from specific information from a past lesson.***

Modeling Questions require the most "work" for the teacher, but serve as an important "building" opportunity for readers: "Let's look at a fable together and see if we can describe the characteristics of it so we can make good decisions about other stories that might be fables too." ***In Modeling Questions, students are shown examples of the types of responses that benchmarks describe as successful student responses. Students learn the ways to seek and form answers that are specific, focused, and directed to the text and the desired type of critical thinking through reading.***

A Whale of a Tale

A gray whale raised at Sea World must learn to live in the sea.

As a scientist studying gray whales, Jim Sumich needs a lot of patience. He has spent years out at sea quietly waiting for baby gray whales to come to the surface. Sometimes he uses small balloons to trap the air from their blowholes, the openings on the tops of their heads. By studying their breathing, Sumich hopes to learn more about how a gray whale's body works.

One day in January 1997, Sumich got a big break. A 1,660-pound newborn gray whale washed up on a California shore. Animal rescue workers brought the tired, hungry orphan, a female, to Sea World in San Diego and named her J.J. "Suddenly we had this week-old gray whale drop in our laps." Sumich says J.J.'s arrival gave scientists the rare chance to study one of the sea's great giants up close. They learned new information about how gray whales breathe, hear and feed. But the scientists had an even bigger plan for J.J. They decided that someday they would try to release her back into the ocean.

Before she could return to her natural home, she had to grow strong. She needed to gain a lot of weight, so workers cooked up a high-fat formula that was like whale's milk. The recipe? Heavy cream, clams and powdered milk. It may sound fishy to you, but J.J. gulped it down and started growing and growing and growing. Since arriving at Sea World, J.J. has been gaining about two pounds every hour! She now weighs more than 17,000 pounds and is 29 feet long. And she's not nearly full grown.

J.J. is so healthy that scientists think she is almost ready to return to the ocean. They hope to release her in the next few weeks, when gray whales are migrating from southern Pacific waters near Mexico to colder waters near Alaska. "She'll have other gray whales to follow and to teach her where to feed," says Kevin Robinson, J.J.'s chief caretaker at Sea World.

But J. J.'s release won't be easy. For one thing, she's huge! A 32 foot-long sling has been designed to load her onto the back of a truck and then onto a boat. "Anything could happen," says Keith Yip, Sea World's supervisor of animal care. "Nothing like this has ever been done before."

Scientists are also concerned that J.J. may have problems eating on her own. J.J. is a baleen (Buh-len) whale, which means she has stiff bristles instead of teeth. The bristles trap tiny shrimplike creatures called krill, as well as small fish and worms. It takes a lot of krill to fill a gray whale's giant belly—2,400 pounds a day! It's too hard for scientists to collect that much krill, so they've fed her squid and fish instead. Now they are hoping that J.J. will learn to eat krill once she's back in the ocean.

Even if J.J. does develop a taste for krill, scientists are worried she may not realize that killer whales have a taste for her! Killer whales are a natural enemy of gray whales. But J.J.'s tank at Sea World is near the killer whale tank, and she may not fear them the way she should..

Still, J.J.'s sheltered life at Sea World may give her some advantages. "She is probably the healthiest, best-rested, 14-month-old gray whale on this planet," says Sumich.

Scientists have come up with an unusual way to film some of J.J.'s journey. They have trained two sea lions fitted with special video cameras to follow her. And scientists are planning to attach electronic markers to her back that will also help keep track of her.

If J.J.'s release goes well, it may lead to the freeing of other captive whales, including Keiko, the killer whale from the "Free Willy" movies. Keiko now lives at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. His caretakers are hoping to release him as early as this fall.

Even if J.J.'s return is a success, visitors to Sea World will be a little unhappy. "I think she'll be happier in the ocean, but I feel sad that people won't get to see her anymore," says Karen Henriquez, 10. Karen's fifth-grade class in Los Angeles folded 1,000 origami cranes as a good-luck present to J.J. "She's a very special whale."

DID YOU KNOW?

- The blue whale is the world's largest animal. An elephant can fit on a blue whale's tongue.
- Gray whales were hunted almost to extinction during the 19th and early 20th centuries. But their population has bounced back since they gained legal protection in 1946. Today there are more than 20,000 of them.
- A whale's skin is coated with oil to help it slide through the water. The skin feels smooth and rubbery, like a hard-boiled egg.
- A whale's tooth forms a new ring every year, just like a tree. Scientists can tell a whale's age by cutting a tooth in half and counting the rings.
- A blue whale's heart weights as much as a Volkswagen Beetle car!
  Whales are able to grow to such a huge size because their weight is held up by the water in the ocean. Their bones are lightweight and full of holes, like sponges.
- Killer whales are the fastest whales—they can swim as fast as 34 miles an hour! They got their name because they rule as the ocean's top hunters. They eat fish, seals, dolphins and other whales. But they do not eat humans.
- Whales cannot see well underwater, but they have very good hearing. Whales and bats are the only animals to use a system called echolocation. They find their way by following sounds and echoes. They also use sounds to find food.
- Male humpback whales sing to attract females. Each whale has his own song. A recording of humpback songs flew aboard the Voyager spacecraft as a greeting from Planet Earth!
  The humpback has the longest flippers of any whale, up to 17 feet.
- Whales, like humans, are mammals. Baby whales are called calves, and they drink milk from their mothers.

Assessment Models for "A Whale of a Tale"
"Traits of an Effective Reader: Reading an Informational Text Scoring Guide Grade 4-12"
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Please read each of the following questions carefully. Using your best critical reading skills, answer the questions in complete sentences and use quotes from the essay, "A Whale of a Tale" whenever possible.

Decoding Conventions:
There are two parts to the essay, "A Whale of a Tale." The first is the *article* that describes the care and possible release of J.J. The second part is the "Did You Know…" *list of facts* about whales. How did the two parts of the essay help you to know more about whales? What purpose did each section have?

Establishing Comprehension:
In all kinds of texts, there are details—facts, ideas, and examples—that help explain a subject. There are *significant* details that give readers the most important information about a subject. There are also *supporting* details that give readers additional information about a subject, but these details are not necessarily the most important facts. List one significant and one supporting detail from "A Whale of a Tale" and use your own words to explain why one is significant and one is supporting.

Realizing Context:
In the essay "A Whale of a Tale," scientists are concerned about J.J.'s ability to care for herself since she is a *baleen* whale. In your own words, explain what "baleen" means and why it is a worry to the scientists.

Developing Interpretation:

There is a possibility that JJ may not survive in the wild ocean on her own. Using facts and quotes from the essay, analyze why it is a good idea to release JJ or a bad idea to release her. Defend your answer using facts and quotes from the essay.

Integrating for Synthesis:

Using facts from the essay, list in order the five most important details that have led to the possible release of JJ. After listing the details in order, write 2-3 sentences that explains why you chose those particular details.

Critiquing for Evaluation:

Using quotes and facts from the essay, challenge this statement: "Having been raised by humans, J.J. will have a hard time learning to be a whale." Do you think it is a true statement or untrue? Explain your answer.

TWO STUDENT EXTENDED RESPONSE SAMPLES USING THE TRAITS OF AN EFFECTIVE READER

Student Work Samples: Al, Fifth Grade

Before we administered the assessment, we asked Al and all the other students to complete a Reading Interest Survey to give us a picture of who they were as readers. Al's RIS looked like this:

Reading Interest Survey:

Name: Al Grade: 5 Teacher: Buchanan

How many minutes a day do you read: probably about a half hour

Do you read for enjoyment too or just for homework? For both actually, but I like to do read, but I get real busy.

Do your parents and other relatives read a lot? Not really. Maybe the newspaper.

Do adults at home read out loud to you? Not anymore. When I was a young child they did.

What are your favorite kinds of books? Mystery, suspense, you know thrillers, kind of.

Do you read things other than books? Newspapers, magazines, the internet? Not a lot. Maybe magazines sometimes.

What are some of your favorite activities? Do you ever read about those activities? Can you give an example?
My favorite activities are camping, watching movies, hanging out with my friends. I don't know what you mean by reading about those activities.

What is your favorite subject at school? History. I like hearing about cool stuff like wars.

Do you like reading in that subject? Yeah, but sometimes the history book is hard.

What is one goal you have for yourself as a reader in this class? I want to keep learning about neat stuff, and I want to learn the hard words so it is not so hard when we read out loud.

What is your plan to meet your reading goal? Practice I guess.

As your teacher, how can I help you meet your reading goal? Help me with the words I don't know, and talk to me when we do history.

We can learn quite a bit about Al from his reading interest survey. He appears to see himself as a reader in the context of school and textbook reading. He says he likes mysteries, suspense, and thrillers, yet he also gets "real busy" at home. What is most revealing about Al's RIS is his love of history and yet his apparent struggle with content-specific vocabulary. He is "engaged" with the power of learning history, and he says that he "wants to learn the hard words so it is not so hard to read out loud." Al's ability to "pinpoint" the difficulty he has with reading sets up wonderful instructional and assessment opportunities to address the problem of content-specific vocabulary. Once we demonstrate four or five strategies for understanding vocabulary in concept terms, Al is well on his way to making even more meaningful connections with his love of history through the process of reading.

Decoding Conventions

Question: There are two parts to the essay "A Whale of a Tale." The first is the *article* that describes the care and possible release of J.J. The second part is the "Did You Know…" *list of facts* about whales. How did the two parts of the essay help you to know more about whales? What purpose did each section have?

Al's Answer: Well, in the first part it said whales gain about 2 pounds every hour and that J.J. is probably the healthiest best rested 14 month year old whale on this planet and that is the same information that was interesting and fun to read. In the second part it gave information that was also fun and interesting to read like when it said that the blue whale can sit on an elephant's tongue and that a blue whale's heart weighs as much as a Volkswagon beetle car.

Teacher Assessment: Al's response scores a "3" on the Reading an Informational Text Scoring Guide. His response "generally answers the question using some basic text structure language appropriately." He refers to "the first part " and "the second part," demonstrating a basic awareness of the two differently organized forms of text contained in the essay. Further, he provides two good examples from both the article and the list of facts, but the response does not meet the requirements for a "4" or a "5" in that "the examples need to be well-supported and their use clear." Lastly, Al's comment that both parts of the essay are "fun and interesting to read" supports his contention on his RIS that informational texts are interesting to him but also somewhat difficult. His response is still fairly safe and demonstrates a hesitancy to move beyond the question.

Establishing Comprehension

Question: In all kinds of texts, there are details—facts, ideas, and examples—that help explain a subject. There are *significant* details that give readers the most important information about a subject. There are also *supporting* details that give readers additional information about a subject, but these details are not necessarily the most important facts. List one significant and one supporting detail from "A Whale of a Tale" and use your own words to explain why one is significant and one is supporting.

Al's Answer: The significant idea I think is when it says but J.J.'s release won't be easy. I think this is a significant detail because that is what the people are mostly talking about. The supporting idea is I think is when it says for one thing she's huge! The reason I think this is the supporting detail is because this is one of the reasons it won't be easy to release J.J.

Teacher Assessment: Al does a great job on this response. He scores a "4" on the scoring guide for establishing comprehension. He uses comprehension language appropriately—"significant" and "supporting"—and he chooses two details and links them together well with the overall theme of the difficulty associated with J.J.'s release. The only characteristic of his response that does not fulfill the "5" on the scoring guide is that it does not "build beyond the question using inference and interpretation to support his comprehension."

Realizing Context

Question: In the essay "A Whale of a Tale," scientists are concerned about J.J.'s ability to care for herself since she is a *baleen* whale. In your own words, explain what "baleen" means and why it is a worry to the scientists.

Al's Answer: Baleen means that a whale has stiff bristles and not real teeth and the scientists are worried that J.J. may have trouble eating all by herself.

Teacher Assessment: Al scores a "3" on the scoring guide for realizing context. His response "generally answers the question" when he says "baleen means that a whale has stiff bristles instead of teeth and the scientists are worried that J.J. may have trouble eating all by herself." Additionally, his response is definitely "close to the surface," and the "whole idea of contextual relationships between many factors and issues is still developing." In a revision of this response, Al might also include the fact that a "baleen" whale filters krill and other small organisms from the ocean, and the fact that, because J.J. has been raised in captivity, she does not know how to use her "baleen" properly.

Developing Interpretation

Question: There is a possibility that J.J. may not survive in the wild ocean on her own. Using facts and quotes from the essay, analyze why it is a good idea to release J.J. or a bad idea to release her. Defend your answer using facts and quotes from the essay.

Al's Answer: I think that they shouldn't put J.J. in the ocean because in the essay it says that J.J. may have problems eating on her own. J.J. is a baleen whale which means she has stiff bristles instead of teeth and so J.J. might not get used to what is in the ocean to eat and then die.

Teacher Assessment: Al scores a "2" on the scoring guide for developing interpretations. His response "generally answers the question," and it "cites very obvious examples from the text" when he says that "JJ is a baleen whale and that means she has stiff bristles instead of teeth." This is a paraphrased quote from the essay. Further, Al's response demonstrates that "connections between the analysis and the examples are not always evident" when he generally alludes to the fact that being a "baleen" whale means that she will not know what to eat in the ocean. Although the majority of Al's response matches the indicators for a "3," the fact that he did not include any direct quotes or specific facts from the essay drops it into the "2" category.

Integrating for Synthesis

Question: Using facts from the essay, list in order the five most important details that have led to the possible release of JJ. After listing the details in order, write 2-3 sentences that explains why you chose those particular details.

Al's Answer: 1. Before she could return to her natural home, J.J. had to grow strong. 2. A 32 foot long sling has been designed to load her onto the back of a tank and then onto a boat. 3. She is probably the healthiest best rested 14 month old gray whale on this planet. 4. If J.J.'s release goes well, it might lead to the freeing of other captive whales, including Keiko, the killer whale from the Free Willy movies. 5. I think she'll be happier living in the ocean.

I chose these details because in the beginning they said she just has to grow strong and then they have designed a sling for her. They might release other whales and they're sure that they'll miss her.

Teacher Assessment: Al scores a "3" on the scoring guide for integrating for synthesis. He adequately answers the questions including the two components of listing five details and then providing analysis for his choices. His analysis, however, fits exactly into the indicator descriptions. His response "cites 'safe' examples and parallel development is not visible." The response is also "somewhat disjointed." Al's skill in sequencing and analysis is still definitely in development, but his desire to respond to the question's components is rewarded on the scoring guide. It provides an example of having the framework in place and needing some experience with modeling of "5" examples to see where his response can ultimately go.

Critiquing for Evaluation

Question: Using quotes and facts from the essay, challenge this statement: "Having been raised by humans, J.J. will have a hard time learning to be a whale." Do you think it is a true statement or untrue? Explain your answer.

Al's Answer: I think this is a true statement because J.J. hasn't been having krill for food like she should be. Instead, they're feeding her squid and fish. It even quotes in the essay, now they are hoping that J.J. will learn to eat krill once she's back in the ocean.

Teacher Assessment: Al's response scores a "2" on the scoring guide for critiquing for evaluation. His response "generally answers the question," but it still stays very close to the literal issues raised in the essay instead of rising to the larger "universal" issues displayed in the question. Again, not using a direct quote hurts Al's score on the response because it does not fulfill the requested elements of the question. His use of one specific example, "J.J. hasn't been having krill like she should be," is once again "somewhat safe and only connected to other ideas in fairly limited ways," as stated on the scoring guide.

Overall Teacher Assessment: We now have a picture of Al's ability to respond in depth using his critical reading skills in this qualitative assessment. If we look at his scores and placements across the range of the traits, they look like this:

	Conventions	*Comprehension*	*Context*	*Interpretation*	*Synthesis*	*Evaluation*
Informational Text Scoring Guide	3	4	3	2	3	2

One of Al's strengths as a reader is his desire to work hard to achieve success. This desire is demonstrated through his willingness to respond to the questions as fully as he is capable. His critical reading ***depth*** will soon come along when he is shown models of other successful responses. In a one-on-one interview with Al, we talked about his strength area, establishing comprehension, and discussed ways to "move beyond the question" and demonstrate more risk-taking with his answers. He confided in the researcher, "I'd like to put more into my answers, but I am always afraid of being wrong." By using the Traits of an Effective Reader Scoring Guide, Al can strengthen and develop his critical reading ability while seeing positive growth through the use of a scoring guide that supports and encourages the growing strength and confidence of his responses.

Student Work Samples: Aspen, Fifth Grade

Let's look at one more student sample. Aspen, a classmate of Al's, is also in fifth grade in Gladstone, Oregon. Let's look at Aspen's reading interest survey.

Reading Interest Survey:

Name: Aspen Grade: 5 Teacher: Buchanan

How many minutes a day do you read: usually about 1 hour or so; it depends on how much homework I have.

Do you read for enjoyment too or just for homework? I read for both, and sometimes I keep reading in my school books even though I am done.

Do your parents and other relatives read a lot? Yes, I guess so. They read the newspaper, work on the computer, and help my sister and I with our homework.

Do adults at home read out loud to you? No, in fact, they make me read out loud to them!

What are your favorite kinds of books? I like to read mystery novels, and really good books like Cynthia Voigt and Jane Yolen. They're my favorite authors.

Do you read things other than books? Newspapers, magazines, the internet? Yes, I like to read a lot of different things. My mom always lets me get a magazine at the store when she buys one too.

What are some of your favorite activities? Do you ever read about those activities? Can you give an example?
My favorite activities are playing with my friends, going to my dance class, and singing in choir in school. I don't really read about those activities, but I might if I knew where they had books like that.

What is your favorite subject at school? Definitely reading and writing workshop. I work on things the whole time, and I love to conference with Mrs. Buchanan. She's the best.

Do you like reading in that subject? I have read almost our whole book even though we haven't had all those assignments.

What is one goal you have for yourself as a reader in this class? I want to read Oprah's book list, but my mom says it is too hard for me. I would like to just try.

What is your plan to meet your reading goal? I think I'll have to go to the public library to get some of her books. But, they do have them at Starbucks, so maybe I can get them there.

As your teacher, how can I help you meet your reading goal? Help me with words I don't know, but also tell me about books you think I would like. Not just novels, you know, but all kinds.

We can learn quite a bit about Aspen's identity as a reader from her reading interest survey. She has a strong personal identity as a reader, naming her favorite authors and genres; she reads at home, and distinguishes between reading for homework and for pleasure. Her interest in academic reading, and thus, we can assume, informational text reading through her textbooks, goes beyond the boundaries of the homework assignment for that day. Aspen also demonstrates a strong interest in the reading and writing connection. With state standards around the country also proposing a committed link between reading and writing, Aspen has the potential for demonstrating that strong link on large-scale performance assessment tests.

Decoding Conventions

Question: There are two parts to the essay "A Whale of a Tale." The first is the *article* that describes the care and possible release of J.J. The second part is the "Did You Know…" *list of facts* about whales. How did the two parts of the essay help you to know more about whales? What purpose did each section have?

Aspen's Answer: Well the "whale of a tale" purpose was to tell me about one specific whale—JJ—the whale who was found and raised at Sea World, and the "did you know" purpose was to tell me interesting facts about all whales in general. Like one fact was that a blue whale's heart was as big a VW Bug car. The two parts of the essay helped me learn about whales by making it easy to understand both one whale and also whales in general and they kept it interesting too. The two parts worked together because I learned about how amazing it was that such a huge whale was raised in captivity.

Teacher Assessment: Aspen scores a "4" on the scoring guide for decoding conventions. Her response is strong and she demonstrates "beyond-the-question thinking" when she says "the two parts work together because I learned about how amazing it was that such a huge whale was raised in captivity." Her examples are well-chosen, and they just miss the "5" indicator of making clear, strong connections. One other small area of improvement could take place in her use of text structure language.

Establishing Comprehension

Question: In all kinds of texts, there are details—facts, ideas, and examples—that help explain a subject. There are *significant* details that give readers the most important information about a subject. There are also *supporting* details that give readers additional information about a subject, but these details are not necessarily the most important facts. List one significant and one supporting detail from "A Whale of a Tale" and use your own words to explain why one is significant and one is supporting.

Aspen's Answer: "It's too hard for scientists to collect that much krill, so they've fed J.J. squid and fish." I think this is significant because it's important that J.J. be able to find enough food to eat. This quote tells you about a major theme in the story. "Animal rescuers named her J.J." This is a supporting detail, because even though it's nice to know her name you would still know what the story was about without it. It also supports the major theme because wild whales don't have names, and J.J. is a whale in captivity.

Teacher Assessment: Aspen scores a "5" on the scoring guide for establishing comprehension. Her response "demonstrates a purposeful, expansive, and knowledgeable comprehension of an informational text." Her response directly answers the question and even moves into considerations of theme which use inferential and interpretative levels of comprehension. Aspen's chosen examples—krill and eating habits—concern the central factor determining whether J.J. will be successful at living on her own in the wild. This is a top-notch response!

Realizing Context

Question: In the essay "A Whale of a Tale," scientists are concerned about J.J.'s ability to care for herself since she is a *baleen* whale. In your own words, explain what "baleen" means and why it is a worry to the scientists.

Aspen's Answer: Baleen means she has stiff bristles on her teeth for catching krill and since she has to eat 2,400 pounds of krill a day, scientists fed her squid and fish instead. They are worried that she may not find enough to eat. If she even develops a taste for krill it will be miracle.

Teacher Assessment: Aspen scores a "4" on the scoring guide for realizing context. Her response is strong and specific; she defines the term "baleen," she uses the example of 2,400 pounds of krill a day, and she reports the choice the scientists made to feed her squid and fish instead. Her connection between the vocabulary term "baleen" and the theme of the essay (the scientists' worry that J.J. may not survive in the wild) is fairly clear when she says "they are worried that she may not find enough to eat and if she develops a taste for krill it will be a miracle," but she doesn't push farther to discuss an "in-depth understanding of contextual relationships," as demanded by the indicators of a "5."

Developing Interpretation

Question: There is a possibility that J.J. may not survive in the wild ocean on her own. Using facts and quotes from the essay, analyze why it is a good idea to release J.J. or a bad idea to release her. Defend your answer using facts and quotes from the essay.

Aspen's Answer: In some ways, I think they should release J.J. but I also don't think they should so I'll defend both answers. Why yes? Well when they found J.J. she only weighed 1,660 pounds and now she weighs over 17,000, and she is still growing rapidly. Also scientist Jim Sumich says "she is probably the healthiest 14 month old whale in the world!" Why no? Because she's been nurtured since she was a newborn at Sea World. She has never had to hunt for food so she may not survive. I don't know how I would resolve this problem. I guess the best way is to decide what's more important—freedom or living longer. What do you think?

Teacher Assessment: Aspen would score a "4" on the scoring guide for developing interpretations. Her response is wonderful; it is thoughtful, impassioned, and aware of larger universal issues. In some large-scale testing situations, Aspen would likely be penalized for not choosing one interpretation and defending it. But in this classroom assessment, we encouraged the students to be risk-takers and independent thinkers, and Aspen's response demonstrates this quality. The response fulfills most of the indicators for the "5" on the scoring guide: it directly addresses the question, it uses specific evidence, it even makes use of an expert authority by citing Jim Sumich's quote. However, it does not achieve a "5" status because, although it addresses the question well, it does not choose one stance, thereby weakening the overall interpretation.

Integrating for Synthesis

Question: Using facts from the essay, list in order the five most important details that have led to the possible release of J.J. After listing the details in order, write 2-3 sentences that explain why you chose those particular details.

Aspen's Answer: 1)J.J. gulped up the milk gaining 10,340 pounds, and she is healthy2) She has never eaten krill before 3) She has been raised in sight of the killer whale tank 4) she does not remember the open ocean or how to migrate 5) She deserves a chance for freedom.

The five details I chose show that even though some of the odds are against JJ surviving, some of the odds do support her living in freedom. This article reminds me of kids leaving home someday. You have to let them go someday.

Teacher Assessment: Aspen scores a "4" on the scoring guide for integrating for synthesis. Her response demonstrates a level of achievement exactly between the indicators of "5" and "3." She answers the question fairly well; she does not employ synthesis language, yet her details have a strong parallel connection that demonstrates her understanding of this text's theme in comparison with other experiences (leaving home). However, the response does not yet integrate multiple sources and build them into one harmonious whole.

Critiquing for Evaluation

Question: Using quotes and facts from the essay, challenge this statement: "Having been raised by humans, J.J. will have a hard time learning to be a whale." Do you think it is a true statement or untrue? Explain your answer.

Aspen's Answer: True, because she's been nurtured her whole life and has never had to hunt. Humans have always provided everything for J.J. so she may not know what to do when released. I think she will have a hard time learning to be wild again. But, maybe she will have some instinct to do what baleen whales are supposed to do. The scientists are experts and they must have thought that she could do it, or they wouldn't have let her go.

Teacher Assessment: Aspen scores a "4" on the scoring guide for critiquing for evaluation. Her response is thorough and thoughtful; it makes good use of examples and connects them to other ideas. The response does move beyond the parameters of the question. The only thing missing from Aspen's response are direct quotes to support her evaluation of J.J.'s situation. Without defensible evidence, Aspen's argument does not carry as much weight as it could. This is an excellent "teaching sample" for helping Aspen to improve the quality of her responses. In an one-on-one conference, Aspen's teacher could nurture her growth as a reader by encouraging her to make a selection of quotes and then integrate them into her response.

Overall Teacher Assessment: We now have a picture of Aspen's ability to respond in depth using her critical reading skills in this qualitative assessment. If we look at her scores and placements across the range of the traits, they look like this:

	Conventions	*Comprehension*	*Context*	*Interpretation*	*Synthesis*	*Evaluation*
Informational Text Scoring Guide	4	5	4	4	4	4

Aspen is a skilled, thoughtful, and critical reader. She scores well on all of the traits and exceptionally well on the trait of comprehension. Aspen's responses consistently demonstrate a "reading beyond the question" ability, and an excellent selection of details and examples to illustrate her critical reading. Yet Aspen's growth as a reader can continue. An assessment of skills reveals that she can reach farther in her responses, mainly through the selection and use of quotes to support her suppositions. With this addition to her critical reading ability, Aspen will be well on her way to producing verifiable, defensible, and thoughtfully grounded responses that will serve her well in secondary education and beyond.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
The Traits of an Effective Reader
Reading an Informational Text Scoring Guide
Grades 3-12
Developed by Lesley D. Thompson, Ph.D.

Decoding Conventions

- The writing *conventions* of grammar, punctuation, word recognition, sentence structure
- The organizational *conventions* of the author or originating source name, the title, the chapter, the unit, the subsections, the sidebars, the glossary, the index, the table of contents, tables, graphs, or other text features
- The genre *conventions* (newspaper, magazine, text books, brochures, instructions, essays) and the types of modes appropriate to each informational genre (cause and effect, comparison contrast, proposition and support, goal, action, outcome, description, sequential spatial, etc.), the distinctions between each informational genre and the expectations readers have for informational genres

5 The advanced response demonstrates confidence in decoding conventions of informational texts and uses conventions information to form a thoughtful "thinking frame" of a text.
The response or responses directly answer the question(s) and use appropriate text structure language in specific and precise ways. The response or responses select an excellent example or several excellent examples to illustrate the reader's understanding of conventions. The examples are well-supported and the connections are clear. The response or responses also demonstrate a willingness and a desire to respond "beyond" the question(s) by building onto the initial question(s) and enlarging the thinking frame.

3 The developing response is growing in confidence in decoding conventions of the informational text and uses conventions information to form an initial "thinking frame" of the text.
The response or responses answer the question(s) generally and use some basic text structure language appropriately. The response or responses can allude to a general example or examples from the text to illustrate the reader's understanding of the conventions. The response or responses are fairly safe and stay definitely within the confines of the question(s).

1 The emerging response is just beginning to decode conventions and often times the challenge of decoding gets in the way of forming a "thinking frame" for the literary text.
The response or responses do not adequately answer the question (s) but may use text structure language to demonstrate some knowledge and application of decoding conventions. The response or responses do not usually provide an example or examples from the text but instead focus on more general information. The response or responses can usually be characterized as sketchy and incomplete.

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Establishing Comprehension

- Use pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies to "squeeze" meaning out of the informational text
- Identify and explain vocabulary key to the main thesis of the informational text
- Identifying the main idea, major and minor examples, facts, statistics, expert
- Authority, and the turning moments of the informational text
- Distinguish between significant and supporting details that support the main idea
- Summarize and paraphrase with purpose to move towards making inferences and interpretations

5 The advanced response demonstrates a purposeful, expansive and knowledgeable comprehension of an informational text.
The response or responses confidently and directly answer the specific question(s) using comprehension terms to indicate precise understandings. The response or responses select an excellent example or examples to illustrate the reader's in-depth comprehension. Examples chosen are well-developed using clear and specific language and terms. The response or responses also demonstrate a willingness and a desire to respond "beyond" the question(s) by building onto the initial question(s) and increasing comprehension of an informational text into inferential and interpretative levels.

3 The developing response demonstrates an adequate comprehension of an informational text. Purposeful comprehension is still evolving.
The response or responses answer the question(s) in general ways using some comprehension terms to indicate general understandings. The response or responses may select an example or examples to illustrate the reader's literal comprehension. Examples chosen are somewhat "safe" and obvious choices. The response or responses do not venture beyond the initial question(s).

1 The emerging response is searching to establish a basic comprehension of an informational text.
The response or responses do not adequately answer the question(s). The response or responses do not provide examples for evidence but sometimes restate the question using the same words. It is not evident if a basic comprehension of an informational text has been achieved. The response or responses can be characterized as sketchy and incomplete.

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Realizing Context

- The vocabulary reflective of the context of the informational text
- The writing mode, tone, and voice the author or source selected with respect to the context
- The time period and its accompanying social realities in the informational text
- The perspective—point of view—of the informational text and its relationship to social factors
- The subject matter's context and its application to many aspects of informational texts

5 The advanced response realizes context and sees inferential meanings and intended purposes, both implicit and explicit.
The response or responses directly and specifically answer the question(s) using appropriate context terms to demonstrate understanding of inferential meaning. The response or responses use a clear and well-chosen example or examples to illustrate understandings of contextual issues. The response or response go beyond the question's limits and extend into an in-depth understandings of contextual relationships in informational texts.

3 The developing response realizes the context of the informational text to some degree and recognizes obvious types of inference.
The response or responses generally answer the question(s) and use some context terminology to show a basic level of understanding. The response or responses may use an example or examples to illustrate understanding but the examples chosen are somewhat obvious and "close to the surface." The response or responses usually stay within the safe confines of the question. The whole idea of contextual relationships between many factors and issues is still in development.

1 The emerging response guesses at context, but has difficulty accessing inferential types of knowledge.
The response or responses do not adequately address the question(s). The response or responses do not use examples from the text to illustrate inferential understandings. Sometimes the question is just restated using the same words. There is not enough evidence to decide if the reader understood the contextual layers of the informational text. The response demonstrates little effectiveness at "reading between the lines."

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Developing Interpretations

- Identify problems, gaps, ambiguities, conflicts, and/or disparate points of view in informational texts
- Distinguish the contextual source behind the textual material that opens the text up to scrutiny
- Pose analytical explanations that bridge the gap, clarify the ambiguity, and resolve textual problems
- Connect analytical explanations to a "bigger picture."

5 The advanced response interprets to analyze and think critically about informational texts.
The response or responses directly answers the question(s) using specific evidence, clues, and "on target" information. The response or responses use appropriate language that reflects an in-depth understanding of the skills of interpretation. Examples, quotes, and events are cited from the text and connected strongly to the analysis. The response or responses move beyond the question(s), engage the bigger picture—a subject matter framework of historical significance, cultural importance or universal theme.

3 The developing response interprets to expand the text, but is still developing the connections to a larger world view.
The response or responses generally answer the question using some language that indicates an initial layer of interpretation understanding. The response or responses are generally safe, and cite very obvious examples from the text. Connections between the examples and the analysis are not always evident. The response or responses do not yet move beyond the question. Engaging the "bigger picture" is still a developing skill.

1 The emerging response sees interpretation as "talking about a book." Reading and interpreting are still separate processes.
The response or responses do not adequately address the question(s). The response does not cite examples, quotes, or evidence from the informational text to use as a basis for interpretation. Sometimes the question is just restated using the same words. There is not enough evidence of interpretation skill to accurately judge whether the student understands the concept of interpretation.

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Integrating for Synthesis

- Put information in order to explain an informational text's process and/or chronology
- Compare and contrast examples, facts, events and primary and secondary sources in order to make defensible judgments, interpretations, and decisions
- Recognize and describe the relationship between cause and effect in informational texts
- Integrate personal experience, background knowledge, and/or content knowledge with the informational text to create a "synthesis" of text plus knowledge

5 The advanced response integrates textual material and other types of knowledge, and uses decision-making skills to create a synthesis of ideas from an informational text.
The response or responses directly, specifically, and concretely perform the synthesis application directed by the question. The response or responses use synthesis language appropriately to reflect an in-depth understanding of the skills of integrating for synthesis. The example or examples cited are well chosen and have a strong parallel development if the question demands it. The response or responses build beyond the question, integrating several layers and types of knowledge into one harmonious whole.

3 The developing response integrates textual material with aspects of other types of knowledge to create a surface level synthesis that has potential for development.
The response or responses generally perform the synthesis application directed by the question. The response or responses use synthesis language with some accuracy to reflect a basic understanding of the skills of integrating for synthesis. The example or examples cited are usually general and "safe" examples. Parallel development, if demanded, is not always visible. The response can be somewhat disjointed with the layers and types of knowledge not always well integrated.

1 The emerging response employs some skills of synthesizing informational texts, but a fully developed integration is still emerging.
The response or responses do not usually perform the synthesis application directed by the question. The response or responses do not use synthesis language with much accuracy; in fact, use of terminology often does not reflect the skills of integrating for synthesis. General references to an example or examples are made, and there is no visible understanding of parallel development. The response or responses do not usually integrate sources, texts, and understandings to a measurable degree.

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Critiquing for Evaluation

- Experiment with ideas in informational texts
- Express opinions about informational texts
- Raise questions about informational texts
- Make good judgments about informational text by using a synthesis of material derived from interpretation and inferential information
- Challenge the ideas of the author or originating source by noting bias, distortion, and/or lack of coherence
- Contrast the accuracy of textual information with other sources and form solid, defensible critiques

5 The advanced response evaluates to assert a strong voice in the textual relationship.
The response or responses thoroughly and thoughtfully answer the evaluation question. Evaluation terminology is used effectively, precisely, and thoroughly to indicate the reader's critique of the informational text. The example or examples chosen are well-developed, placed in context, and connected well to other ideas. The response or responses move beyond the parameters of the question and critically engage the world of text and ideas in a solid, defensible judgement.

3 The developing response hesitates to evaluate thoroughly; it still plays it somewhat "safe."
The response or responses adequately answer the evaluation question. Evaluation terminology is sometimes used, but the terms chosen do not always match the critical thinking displayed in the response. The example or examples cited from the text are somewhat obvious and safe, and connected to other ideas in fairly limited ways. The response or responses generally stay within the question and do not venture into the larger world of critical discourse.

1 The emerging response is just beginning to explore a critical stance to an informational text.
The response or responses do not adequately answer the evaluation question. Evaluation terminology is used sporadically if at all, and rarely indicates the reader's critique of the informational text. The example or examples chosen are incomplete or sketchily described, and not connected to other ideas or issues. The response or responses are incomplete and at times, just restate the question words.

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Using the Curriculum Inquiry Cycle to Improve Teaching and Learning in Reading

Dr. Jane Braunger and Dr. Maureen Carr
School Improvement
NWREL

Assuring Competency in Reading
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Curriculum Inquiry: Improving Learning and Teaching
An Overview

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INTRODUCTION

Changing Expectations: Students

Growing concern about the achievement of American students and its perceived impact on the nation's economic future prompted the development of a national educational agenda that would prepare American students to function in an exploding information age. The agenda was a call for the systematic restructuring of American education. This redesign has taken many forms as it has been implemented across the nation: site-based management, school choice, core academic curriculum, changes in assessment, and high academic standards to be met by all students (Education Week, 1995).

The *National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners* specifically identified academic achievement in two of the national goals. These goals stated that American students would demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter and that, by the year 2000, students in the U. S. would excel in mathematics and science (Education Week, 1995). In 1994, the improvement of student achievement through high standards for all students became national policy when Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the Improve America's Schools Act were signed into law.

The development of high standards and the application of these standards to "all students" presents a challenge to educators. There is an expectation that students will reach higher levels of literacy, develop a deeper understanding of subject matter, become technologically sophisticated, and achieve the capacity to adapt to ever-changing economic and social conditions (Brown & Campione, 1994).

Changing Expectations: Teachers

As the tide of reform swept across the nation, high academic standards became a cornerstone of reform in most states. Forty-nine states now have state level standards to guide the education of students in the schools. As plans were discussed to create a "world class" system of education a vital element was often not considered: teacher knowledge and ability to assist students to reach higher standards.

It seems apparent that high-quality learning requires classroom teachers who are knowledgeable about subject matter and learning if students are to reach the academic achievement set forth in content and performance standards. We already have many accomplished teachers in this country who know how to make learning accessible to students and through respect and caring affirm their students' capability (Rose, 1995). How can we insure that we will continue to have a high quality teaching force?

In 1986, the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession recommended that a National Board be established to develop standards that would describe "what teachers should know and be able to do" (NBPTS, 1994). The National Board began its task in

1987 by articulating a clear vision of accomplished teaching practice. Teachers at all levels of education worked to develop this vision as well as the professional standards in subject matter that followed. There are five guiding principles set forth in National Board Vision Statement (NBTPS, 1994):

- Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- Teachers are members of learning communities.

Learning that engages students in challenging and meaningful tasks and meets high quality standards is not easy to accomplish, especially when assessment is used for sorting and selecting students and the teacher's primary role is to be the transmitter of information. The emphasis on bringing all students to higher levels of achievement may conflict with traditional ways of teaching and evaluating students. A standards-based system requires substantial changes in the kinds of learning experiences that occur in classrooms and an increase in the complexity of the content for which students and teachers will be held accountable. Teachers have to accept new ways of learning and teaching that may shift the roles they have traditionally played in the classroom. A set of standards for which everyone is accountable increases the importance of collaboration among teachers, administrators, parents, students and community members. Implementing a standards-based system takes not only an adept teaching staff but the commitment and "collective responsibility" of the school and larger community (Newmann and Wehlage, 1995).

The success of educational reform in the Pacific Northwest depends on the ability of teachers to restructure and redesign curriculum and instruction congruent with emerging state and national standards. The critical need is to strengthen the substance of the curriculum through more widespread and effective implementation of new curriculum models and instructional practices which research indicates substantially increase student learning. NWREL supports teachers in this curriculum and instructional renewal process by providing increased professional development services in curriculum and instruction.

Re-Conceptualizing Learning And Teaching Through Inquiry

> ***"It is teachers who, in the end, will change the world of the classroom by understanding it."*** **Lawrence Stenhouse**

In order to fulfill the promise of optimal achievement for all students, we must change the "core of educational practice," that is, we must re-conceptualize our ideas of learning and intelligence and rethink the purpose and organization of schooling in a democratic society (Elmore, 1996). Re-conceptualizing learning and teaching means teachers must examine their ideas about knowledge, about the role of students and teachers in the educational process, and about how these ideas or beliefs are translated into instructional practice (Elmore, 1996). Reflecting on classroom practice helps to develop insights into the reasons behind the actions. New understandings lead to conscious choices for both belief and teaching practice (Short and Burke, 1991). Inquiry within a professional learning community provides that opportunity.

Inquiry is the way we come to know and understand ourselves and our world. Dewey emphasized the importance of inquiry as part of our socialization; an essential cultural norm (Dewey, 1938). Inquiry is not just thinking seriously about a problem or issue. It is a "systematic, intentional" method of finding solutions to a problem of significant personal or public concern (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993).

At the heart of teacher inquiry is the idea that teaching is a complex, intellectual activity and that teachers can produce new knowledge which can inform the world of instructional practice. When teachers investigate their teaching practice, they examine beliefs about learning and teaching, think about what is or is not expert knowledge, and question common assumptions about schooling (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993).

Inquiry starts with personal knowledge and experience and gradually moves to include other peoples' perspectives. Inquiry involves "participation and negotiation among equals" where alternatives and options arise from thinking through questions collaboratively (Short and Burke, 1996). Inquiry leads to new—albeit temporary—understandings of learning and teaching. The purpose of teacher inquiry is to increase understanding, "create diversity and broaden our thinking" (Short and Burke, 1996).

This process of thinking through a question or concern with peers can have a profound effect on teachers' professional lives. As inquirers into practice, " we look at our knowledge, our assumptions, our interpretations as our practice makes them tangible, as re-searching makes them visible, and as critical consciousness opens them to questioning. What we see then are not merely faces or voices or events but meanings which re-form our practice" (Bissex, 1994).

Curriculum As A Vehicle For Change And Professional Growth

A primary responsibility of teachers in a standards-based system is to map instructional practice onto a group of content and performance standards so that classroom experiences have a clear focus for students. The curriculum developed in this process is the means by which teachers assist students to meet high expectations (Schalock, Tell and Smith, 1997). In this context, curriculum has a broad meaning which includes what will be taught, effective ways to make learning accessible to all students, what will be evaluated, and what assessment formats are consistent with educational goals. It is appropriate then that we make curriculum the lens through which we examine teaching practice.

Views of curriculum are rooted in beliefs and values about the purpose of education, the nature of knowledge and learning, and the roles that teachers and students play in the educational process. Short, Harste, and Burke (1996) have identified curriculum models they have experienced as students and as teachers. The first curriculum perspective is familiar to most of us. We listen to the teacher tell us about a variety of topics and then we read about these topics in a textbook. We assimilate a body of facts which is quite overwhelming, so we try to memorize the discrete pieces of data from our classroom and textbook experiences. We take a test on which we reproduce (we hope) correct responses. We take in a lot of information but often gain little conceptual understanding about essential principles or ideas. We have bits and pieces of the puzzle but we don't see the complete picture. We have experienced the "curriculum as fact" model of learning (Short and Burke, 1996). This curriculum holds students accountable for learning a body of knowledge that the community deems essential for everyone to know.

As teachers we may have been disillusioned by the curriculum as fact model since it neither seems to translate to high achievement for all students nor does it capture student imagination. So we organize themes that connect a variety of skills and information and we use activities to draw these together. We read about frogs. We count frogs. We paint frogs. We observe frogs and record their actions. We move like frogs as part of our exploration of physical movement. We sing about frogs. Our curriculum becomes a series of activities that sometimes connect content and process and sometimes just provide entertainment. We have opted for the "curriculum as activity" model, which may or may not lead to in-depth understanding of concepts and principles (Short, Harste, and Burke, 1996). Important considerations in the activity model are student interests, making connections across disciplines, and getting students engaged in learning that connects with their experience.

Actually themes do have substantial potential for increasing student conceptual understanding as well as sparking student motivation to learn. The key is to select themes that connect to universal concepts through which students can integrate ideas and make connections across curricular areas (Stevens, 1993). For example, frogs may be integrated into a more comprehensive theme such as life cycles or change as an important aspect in the lives of all organisms. Activities like those mentioned above can still be used, but the learning experiences are connected to others that allow students to integrate ideas across topics and content. Themes that touch the essential concerns of all families and individuals allow students to find personal meaning in school learning and assist learners to paint a richer portrait of knowledge.

Another curriculum option is to organize learning around a process of inquiry in which individuals explore ideas of personal and social significance. Short, Harste, and Burke (1996) offer a process for classroom inquiry that begins with "personal and social knowing." In this "curriculum as inquiry" model learners explore what they know about a topic from their own experiences of the world and what they have learned in school and from their families and culture. Immersion in a topic is crucial to develop worthwhile questions for inquiry. Time to explore information extensively leads to the emergence of more significant questions for inquiry.

Learners investigate "knowledge systems" that human beings use to make sense of language, mathematics, science, history, etc. We ask different questions and gain multiple views about learning by looking at question through a variety of lenses—historical, socio-cultural, biological (Short, Harste, and Burke, 1996). In a study of the life cycle, for example, students may investigate the explanations about cycles of life that have emerged over time. Or learners may examine the narratives of various societies about the origins of life. Or students may explore the evolution of biological theories about the life cycle. By looking at questions from many perspectives we develop broader and deeper understandings of our subject and an appreciation for different ways of investigating our questions.

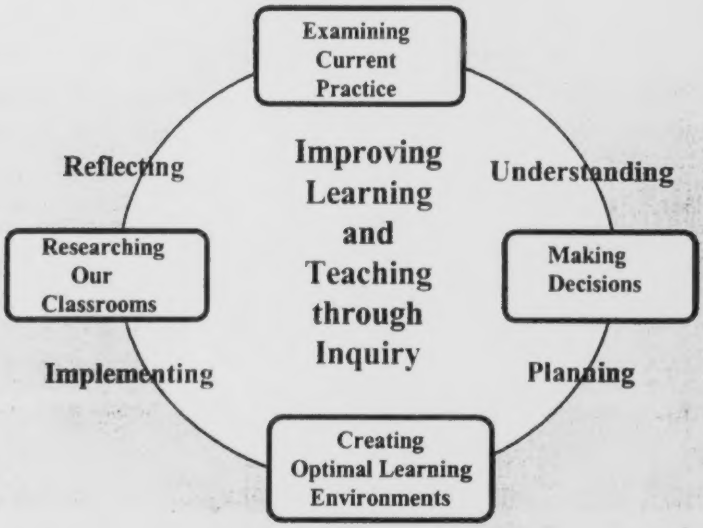
The emphasis in the process is life-long learning. The progression is from the reflection on personal knowledge, to the consideration and understanding of formal knowledge, to communication of reconstructed knowledge and experience through multiple symbol systems or intelligences. Learners come to understand that answers quite often lead to more questions, and each time through this process we re-interpret and re-construct our experience (Short, Harste, and Burke, 1996).

These perspectives are based on a set of deeply held understandings about what is worth knowing, who is at the center of learning, and what the most effective way is to create meaningful learning for learners. There are many other curricular options that represent different answers to these questions—curriculum as a scope and sequence, curriculum as student empowerment, curriculum as a system of knowledge, etc. (Beane, 1995). If teachers are to assume their rightful responsibility to develop as well as implement curriculum, it is crucial that they confront these questions to design a curricular framework that meets the needs of the school and classroom context. Through the curriculum inquiry cycle teachers can look deeply into their ideas about knowledge, the roles that students and teachers play in the development of knowledge, and the relationship between their conceptions of learning and teaching and the kind of learning that occurs in classrooms.

THE CURRICULUM INQUIRY CYCLE

The Curriculum Inquiry Cycle is a process designed to improve learning and teaching, with the classroom as the area of emphasis. A major goal of this NWREL project is to assist teachers and schools to create self-sustaining processes for improving curriculum and instruction. Curriculum inquiry involves teachers in determining the critical experiences necessary to engage students in meeting challenging standards. Educators participating in this ongoing cycle of curriculum renewal develop and articulate local standards which guide their teaching in the context of broad state and national reform priorities; examine current curriculum practice in the school or district; clarify local needs, content and performance standards to determine how to balance competing demands; plan critical classroom experiences to achieve desired student goals; and conduct classroom research on selected practices and educational issues, assessing progress and making needed changes. It is prompted by key questions central to instructional improvement:

- ***What knowledge is crucial? What do we understand about this knowledge?***
- ***What do we know about how people learn?***
- ***What strategies are most powerful for fostering student learning?***
- ***What critical experiences must occur to achieve standards?***
- ***How do members of the learning community collaborate to provide a coherent and meaningful learning experience?***


Examining Current Practice
Understanding
Making Decisions
Planning
Creating Optimal Learning Environments
Implementing
Researching Our Classrooms
Reflecting
Improving Learning and Teaching through Inquiry

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The Curriculum Inquiry Cycle is consistent with the idea of individuals as active constructors of their own learning. It is based on the belief that teachers are capable of identifying significant classroom issues, gathering pertinent data, and analyzing and interpreting the results to inform future practice. The following are the underlying assumptions of the Curriculum Inquiry Cycle:

- **Teachers are knowledgeable professionals.**
- **Planning curriculum is the professional responsibility of teachers.**
- **Curriculum inquiry is a vehicle for professional growth.**
- **Curriculum inquiry leads to improved learning and teaching.**
- **Teachers learn by building on current practice.**
- **Teachers need to share professional expertise.**
- **Curriculum planning is a team effort.**
- **Curriculum inquiry strengthens close connections among curriculum, instruction and assessment.**
- **Curriculum planning is a recursive process.**
- **The classroom is the fundamental unit of school change.**
- **Administrative support is essential for effective curricular and instructional change.**

Critical questions that are addressed within the four elements of the model include:

Examining Current Practice

Key Questions: What does my teaching look like? Why do I work this way? What do I believe about how learning occurs? Is my current practice making a difference in student learning? How do I know? (assessment) Is my teaching consistent with what is known about how people learn? How might some classroom experiences produce different outcomes from those I intend?

Outcomes:

- extensive analysis of current practice in a chosen content area
- rich depiction of the teaching and assessment in a specific content area in the school
- articulation of current goals for student learning
- identification of teachers' beliefs about learning that drive teaching practice
- knowledge of current views of learning (constructivist, social-interaction, brain compatible learning, etc.)

Making Decisions

Key Questions: What is my understanding of curriculum? Are content, performance, and opportunity to learn standards reflected in my teaching practice? How do I set priorities among my goals? Am I aware of alternative models of teaching? Am I aware of alternative assessments?

Outcomes:
- articulation of teachers' beliefs about curriculum (curriculum as fact, activity, inquiry, etc.)
- knowledge of other views of curriculum (curriculum theorists, teachers, researchers, community members, textbook publishers)
- understanding of content and performance standards in the state
- in-depth analysis of the fit between current teaching goals and content standards
- comparison of current expectations for students and performance standards
- translation of standards into classroom practice
- agreement on priorities for student learning and non-negotiables to ensure student attainment of standards
- identification of need areas (teacher knowledge, materials, planning) to achieve priority goals

Creating an Optimal Learning Environment

Key Questions: What are the dynamics of an optimal learning environment? What learning experiences are essential? What assessments are appropriate?

Outcomes:
- analysis of learning/teaching experiences in relationship to stated goals
- determination of critical learning experiences for agreed-upon learning outcomes
- understanding the learning environment from the learner's perspective
- examination of typical student learning experiences in light of 1) conditions of learning, 2) prior knowledge and experience, 3) connections to other learning, and 4) relationship to standards
- design of learning experiences to maximize student learning; teaching for understanding
- criteria for selecting instructional resources
- knowledge of specific teaching/learning strategies for identified goal areas

Researching Our Classrooms

Key Questions: What questions or concerns about teaching and learning in my classroom do I want to explore? How can I work with colleagues to set a productive classroom research agenda? How will we share our findings?

Outcomes:
- a view of teaching as problematic, leading to questions and problem-posing about teaching and about student learning
- strong commitment to collaboration with colleagues in studying classrooms, sharing insights, and acting on the findings to make changes
- identification of specific area to investigate
- decisions about scope of the study and procedures for data gathering
- plan for assessing progress toward curriculum and instruction goals, e.g., impact on student learning
- understanding of curriculum change as professional growth

Collaborative inquiry into questions of particular educational concern is an appropriate way for teachers to achieve congruence between their personal theories and effective practice and to have some measure of control over what passes for educational knowledge. Shulman (1987) has pointed out that teachers must have broader connections within the school, district, and general community. Many people have perceived teaching as an independent activity, but in today's school teachers must be collaborative members planning curriculum and coordinating the various instructional services available to students. They must help to build relationships with parents that foster the school's mission to promote learning, and they must be cognizant of the cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity in their communities that may have an impact on student lives in school. (NBPTS, 1994). Inquiry as part of professional growth forms the basis for the emergence of a true learning community.

WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT LEARNING

What is learning?

Learning is what human beings do to survive. Learning begins at birth (some argue that it happens earlier) and continues throughout life. Some of what we learn is hardwired into our human genes, such as talking and walking. Some of what we learn is planned, like learning to play the guitar or how to solve a quadratic equation. Sometimes we learn without meaning to, like the toothpaste jingle that won't stop singing in our heads. Whether intentional or not, learning is a permanent change in what we know or what we do. What makes learning different from growing size ten feet is that it results from our experiences with people, objects and events.

What are some theories about learning?

Theories of learning vary according to whether the emphasis is on changes in how we think or changes in what we do (Woolfolk, 1995). During most of this century, behaviorism has been the dominant psychological paradigm in education. Behaviorists focus on observable, measurable behaviors to identify universal laws of learning applicable across ages, species, and contents. Learning takes place through the formation of stimulus-response bonds fostered by external consequences or rewards. These bonds or associations are strengthened through repetition and reinforcement. In this model, learning is hierarchical, reactive, and extrinsically motivated (Crain, 1985). The behaviorist tradition is a major influence in many classrooms, as evidenced by drill and practice worksheets, delineation of reading and math into lists of skills, and in the emphasis on objective, standardized tests as the primary assessment of student learning.

During the past 20 years cognitive psychology, socio-cultural psychology and brain research have challenged the behavioral learning assumptions. Cognitive psychology concerns itself with changes in what we know. Cognitive psychologists are interested in how humans acquire knowledge and how knowledge is represented and stored in memory. One theoretical position within this realm supports the idea that individuals construct schemes or categories of knowledge based on direct and indirect experience. Various categories of information are stored and connected in schema networks. For example, a young child with a pet cat or dog has developed lots of ideas (schemata) about these animals based on everyday experience. The child has a schema for pets, albeit a limited one. As the child encounters other animals as pets—guinea pigs, ferrets, parrots, etc.—the concept of pet (schema) is enlarged. When new information is integrated into a schema, learning takes place (Rumelhart, 1977). Presentation of a new idea can evoke several schema networks, and effective assimilation and organization of schema depend on the individual connecting what is known to the new information. Schema theory suggests a learner who actively constructs knowledge by comparing prior knowledge and experience with incoming information and then reorganizing this data to form new and enlarged schemata.

The idea of an individual as creator of his/her own knowledge is referred to as a constructivist theory of learning. Constructivism has also become an influence in education in recent years. Mathematics programs that assist students to formulate concepts through interaction with objects and solving problems with peers; reading programs that connect student prior knowledge with real, meaningful text; and science programs that engage students with important scientific questions are examples of ways educators have incorporated constructivist concepts into their teaching.

Other research has examined human awareness and control over learning processes. Metacognitive knowledge is defined as "knowledge and beliefs accumulated through experience and stored in long term memory that relate to the human mind and its activities" (Flavell, 1985). The ability to plan, monitor understanding and effectiveness of learning strategies correlates with overall cognitive development (Flavell, 1985). This suggests that learning becomes conscious and self-regulated as individuals grow in experience.

Research growing out of the socio-cultural theory of Lev Vygotsky also has had a significant impact on how we organize learning situations and the roles of the teacher and the student in the learning environment. Vygotsky maintained that "every function of the child's cultural development appears twice: on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)...all the higher functions originate as actual relations between human beings" (Vygotsky, 1978). This indicates that meaning is constructed with and through others. The dialogue or "instructional conversation" facilitates meaningful learning (Tharp and Gallimore, 1989). Learning takes place as the novice (student) moves from assistance from an expert (teacher or peer) to independent action or understanding. The distance between the need for assistance and independent functioning is the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). This means that learners need to operate in collaborative environments with assistance from teachers or more knowledgeable students.

While research into cognition has produced viable theories, only recently have we been able to see what happens in the human brain when learning is going on. Fast Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) allows us to observe the brain during cognitive activity and positron emission tomography (PET) indicates how and where the brain processes a series of events (Sylwester, 1995).

The brain processes information in a parallel fashion, looking for emerging patterns. Through the emotional components of the brain our attention is focused on novel or dramatic changes in our environment. Our attention system is quick and effective as a survival mechanism, but it is less helpful in a stable environment where change is gradual. Physical changes occur in the brain as we grow in experience. This means that, while we all start out with a generic brain, individual life experiences change the physical structure of the brain, making each person's brain unique. We can, and do, learn to engage in things that require an individual' s sustained attention and precision, but our brain prefers cooperation and conversation, conceptualization and storytelling as ways to learn (Sylwester, 1995).

What does this new information on the brain mean for educators? Caine, Caine and Crowell (1994) have delineated twelve principles that can frame our thinking about the brain:

1. The brain is a parallel processor.
2. Learning engages the entire physiology.
3. The search for meaning is innate.
4. The search for meaning occurs through patterning.
5. Emotions are critical to patterning.
6. Every brain simultaneously creates parts and wholes.
7. Learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception.
8. Learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes.
9. We have at least two ways of organizing memory.
10. We remember and understand information better if it is embedded in spatial memory.
11. Complex learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat.
12. Every brain is uniquely organized.

Brain compatible teaching emphasizes immersion of learners in complex learning experiences that allow students to internalize information and skills and to create a coherent and personally relevant knowledge system.

What is the connection between learning and intelligence?

The behavioral focus on observable and measurable behavior has also influenced views of intelligence. For most of this century in the United States, intelligence has been thought of as a singular trait that individuals possess in varying degrees. This trait is characterized by logical, scientific thinking and verbal skill. Tests were devised to identify individuals exhibiting high verbal and intellectual behaviors, and students' learning potential was determined by the IQ score.

This perspective on intelligence emphasizes ability as the primary factor in learning both in school and in life. It negates the role of effort, instruction, and technological assistance (Fink, 1995). The focus on test scores trivializes knowledge and supports correctness rather than understanding. Learning becomes the accumulation of factual knowledge, and learners are categorized according to their "ability" to be successful in this process. Schooling becomes a matter of sorting and selecting students to follow paths that reflect this narrow view of human potential.

Several theorists have postulated alternatives to the singular trait theory of intelligence. Howard Gardner connects intelligence to problem-solving in particular cultural settings. He emphasizes the biological origins of problem-solving as a means for survival but contextualizes problem-solving in activities that have high cultural value (Gardner, 1993). Gardner has identified seven "intelligences" that meet a set of criteria including a neurally based operational system and ability to be encoded into a symbol system. For example, musical intelligence is connected to pitch relationships (neural base) and variations in pitch can be encoded into notes (symbol system) (Gardner, 1993). Gardner's theory of seven intelligences (linguistic, mathematical-logical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal and intrapersonal) expands our view of intelligence by offering a set of abilities that we all possess to some degree.

Schools have tended to focus primarily on linguistic and mathematical abilities, although recently the importance of interpersonal capabilities is being emphasized through collaborative projects and cooperative learning groups. Video games, computers and other visual media have stimulated interest in the development of spatial abilities and the value of image as way of encoding information.

Connecting the metacognitive aspect of learning to intelligence, Robert Sternberg has developed a theory of mental self-management called The Triarchic Theory of Intelligence. Sternberg describes three kinds of mental processes that allow an individual to manage the environment. Executive components or mental processes are metacognitive and facilitate planning, monitoring, evaluating, and problem-solving. Performance components are lower order processes used to implement instructions from the executive. Knowledge-acquisition components are used to learn how to solve problems (Sternberg, 1988). These elements are interdependent and interactive. For example, an individual buying a new car must set some criteria for purchase (metacomponents) so s/he must get some information about what to look for in a car (knowledge components). Cars must then be examined and driven to see if they meet the criteria for purchase (performance components) (Sternberg, 1988). This theory presents the picture of an active learner, solving problems and making adjustments to situations based on new information and experience.

The image of a learner that emerges from current thinking in psychology and intelligence stands in opposition to behavioral views of learning and psychometric views of intelligence. Behavioral and psychometric influence in education created a vision of learning that is unidirectional, linear and focused on rote memory. Other theories paint a portrait of an individual actively engaged with other learners, capable of regulating learning processes and motivated by an intrinsic need to communicate, to collaborate and to understand.

WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT TEACHING

"Those who can, do. Those who understand, teach." (Shulman, 1986)

What do teachers need to know and be able to do to provide an optimal learning environment for students?

Lee Shulman (1987) has outlined seven categories of knowledge that teachers need to meet the challenges of today's classrooms:

Content knowledge: not just facts and concepts but also an understanding of the structure of the discipline as defined by scholars in the field.

General pedagogical knowledge: principles and strategies of management and organization.

Curriculum knowledge: ways of organizing learning, materials and programs.

Pedagogical content knowledge: ways of representing information that facilitate understanding and an awareness of those aspects of content that might inhibit learning.

Knowledge of learners and their characteristics: individual differences and human learning and development.

Knowledge of educational contexts: awareness of the relationships among schools, the district, and the larger community.

Knowledge of the aims and purposes of education: perspective on the historical and philosophical origins of education.

Teachers must engage students in learning that helps them to construct content knowledge, explore the relationships among ideas, and make connections to the world beyond the classroom door. Newmann and Wehlage (1995) call teachers' knowledge of practices and assessments that will facilitate learning *authentic pedagogy*. They have identified standards for both the instructional and assessment components of authentic pedagogy. A learning situation is authentic if students are engaged in high order thinking, are developing a deep understanding of subject matter, participate in classroom discourse to build shared understanding, and can relate their knowledge to public issues or personal experience (Newmann and Wehlage, 1995). Authentic performance assessment includes tasks that require students to organize data and consider a variety of possibilities, to understand subject matter concepts and principles, and to communicate understanding beyond the classroom or school (Newmann and Wehlage, 1995).

Teachers use "personal knowledge" to make decisions about practice and to negotiate the path between the personal context of the classroom and the institutional aspects of teaching. Personal knowledge is an awareness and understanding of self as well as knowledge about students' lives, understandings, and concerns (Feiman-Nemser and Floden, 1986).

In a standards-based system, teachers must understand the targets identified in performance standards and be able to map these standards to what needs to be accomplished in the classroom. Teachers must be able to plan with students the ways to meet standards and assist them to evaluate their progress toward quality intellectual achievement. Teachers also must reflect on their effectiveness in facilitating student learning (Schalock, Tell, and Smith, 1997).

What are the sources of a teacher's knowledge base?

To build content knowledge teachers generally study the literature of their discipline(s) not only to learn the information that will be taught to students but also to be informed about the way knowledge is viewed and structured within the content area. In addition to academic preparation, teachers also have access to a myriad of curriculum materials, programs, assessments, and texts that may be useful in helping students learn. Another avenue teachers can explore is research on the processes of schooling, teaching, and learning which offers ideas on the nature of effective schools, behaviors attributed to effective teachers, and current thinking on human learning and development. And finally, teachers can learn about the principles of excellent teaching by examining both their own classrooms and those of other teachers. For example, a teacher might observe and record the reading behavior of a group of students in the classroom to develop a better understanding of the kind of strategies these children use to construct their understandings of text. Teachers learn from the "wisdom of practice" (Shulman, 1987).

Does reflective teaching have an effect on what happens in classrooms?

Several studies of teacher thinking indicate that teachers who think conceptually provide greater feedback to students and are more positive in classroom interactions. "Thoughtful teachers" have a more varied repertoire of instructional strategies and receive more high order thinking responses from students (Glickman, 1986).

Teacher thinking influences choice of content, selection of strategies, and the sequence of learning. There is support for the idea that thoughtful practice has a positive effect both on student achievement and teacher-student relationships. How intensely teachers think about practice relates to the degree of input teachers have in decision-making, flexibility in teaching practice, their perception of the demands of their work, and the time and support they receive to engage in thinking about practice (Clark and Peterson, 1986). Professional development offerings should support teacher autonomy and choice, consider the complexities of teaching and encourage teachers' inquiry into learning and teaching.

Do teachers' beliefs influence their classroom behavior?

We know that teachers, like everyone else, have beliefs about life in general and schooling in particular, but do teacher beliefs have an impact on what happens in classrooms? Richardson (1994) studied the connection between elementary teachers' beliefs about reading and their practice of teaching reading. Open-ended questions were asked in an interview setting and the results analyzed to develop a profile of the teacher beliefs about reading. A strong relationship was found between the researchers' predictions of practice from teacher belief profiles and the actual teaching practice.

The Deford Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) is a multiple-choice instrument used to examine teachers' theories about reading. The assessment was validated by observing teaching episodes and comparing actual practice with the theoretical orientations derived from TORP. There was a significant relationship found between the TORP scores and predictions of practice (Deford, 1985).

Teachers who believe in autonomy allow more student choice and encourage student responsibility for learning. Research on motivation indicates that students in classrooms where teachers have an autonomy orientation are more intrinsically motivated and are more likely to self-regulate behavior and learning (McCombs, 1996).

Are beliefs amenable to change?

Because of their strong emotional connections beliefs can be difficult to change. The earlier a belief becomes part of long-term memory the harder it is to modify. Substantial changes in the belief systems of adults are unlikely, and beliefs may persist even when the adult is presented with contrary evidence (Pajares, 1992).

While changing beliefs in adults may be very difficult, it is not impossible. In the Richardson study, observations of one of the participants indicates that changes in thinking about how students learn to read can occur before the ideas are translated into practice (Richardson, 1994). Guskey (1986), on the other hand, maintains that it is changes in practice that change beliefs, not the reverse. Teachers measure their effectiveness based on how well their students perform and their practice on what works for a particular group of students. If teachers try new practices and students are successful, then the teachers are more likely to believe that doing or thinking in a new way is appropriate. Other researchers suggest that the process of change is complex and may include an interaction of belief, reflection, and behavior (Richardson, 1994).

Why is it important to re-examine beliefs about learning and teaching as we move to a standards-based system?

All teaching and learning is based on a set of assumptions that guide curriculum planning, instruction, and evaluation. The standards-based system assumes that every student can learn a body of knowledge and skills if everyone involved—teachers and learners—clearly understands what the expectations are. The standards-based philosophy further maintains not only that changes must occur in the complexity of learning experiences provided, but also that the way students are taught must be substantially modified.

Most teachers have always had standards for student performance, but these may or may not have been the same standards held by other teachers in their buildings or districts. Many teachers accept the idea that all students can learn, but they may not believe that everyone can learn the same body of knowledge in the same way no matter how much time is allowed. Most teachers want students to do well on assessments, but they may give more credence to in-class performance or their professional knowledge of a student's capabilities when evaluating the success of the classroom program. If we are to implement a standards-based curriculum in every classroom then it is essential that teachers examine their beliefs in light of the assumptions of the standards-based system. When teachers make decisions about curriculum and instruction, they must be able to justify these decisions and provide evidence from research and an examination of their own experience of what works. Professional development should assist teachers to get in touch with their implicit theories or beliefs about teaching and learning to form coherent, rational theories based on evidence (Richardson, 1994).

A view of the individual as meaning maker offers different invitations to learners: opportunities to explore, to doubt, and to resolve doubt through inquiry (Omalza, Aihara, and Stephens, 1997). The idea that individuals construct their own knowledge within a community of learners is reflected in the curriculum inquiry cycle.

The curriculum inquiry cycle encourages conversation about possible ways to look at ourselves and our students. This means asking questions about our assumptions and beliefs about learning, and respecting each other enough to challenge and to demand evidence. Curriculum inquiry is deciding together which learning experiences are negotiable and which are non-negotiable (Santa, 1995). It is a willingness to risk being wrong and to persevere when the light at the end of the tunnel is still pretty dim.

Teachers who have worked with the curriculum inquiry cycle have been most positive about the dialogue that it encourages with colleagues. Teachers have indicated that there is often little time in the week, let alone in a day, for them to engage in substantive discussion of learning and teaching issues. Participation in Curriculum Inquiry workshops facilitates this discussion and motivates teachers to take their issues and ideas back to other colleagues not engaged in the inquiry process.

Diane Stephens (1997) describes teaching as inquiry. Teachers involved in this process learn about themselves, but they also learn about their students. They observe and reflect on the learning process so that all the action they plan for the students supports learning. The important thing for teachers in this process is that they be able to "see schools and students through new eyes" (Buchanan, 1994).

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Thirteen Core Understandings About Reading

Reading as Language

1. Reading is a construction of meaning from written text. It is an active, cognitive, and affective process.
2. Background knowledge and prior experience are critical to the reading process.
3. Social interaction is essential in learning to read.
4. Reading and writing develop together.

Reading as Learning

5. Reading involves complex thinking.
6. Environments rich in literacy experiences and models facilitate reading development.
7. Engagement in the reading task is key in successfully learning to read and becoming a proficient reader.
8. Children's understandings of print are not the same as adults' understandings.
9. Children develop phonemic awareness and knowledge of phonics through a variety of literacy opportunities, models and demonstrations.
10. Students learn successful reading strategies in the context of real reading.
11. Students learn best when teachers employ a variety of strategies to model and demonstrate reading knowledge, strategy, and skills.
12. Students need the opportunity to read, read, read.
13. Monitoring the development of reading processes is integral to student success.

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Effective Practices for Utilizing Volunteer Reading Tutors

Jana Potter and Nancy Henry

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

LEARNS

Linking Education & America Reads through National Service

LEARNS *is a partnership of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), Bank Street College of Education (BSC), and The Southern Regional Council (SRC).*

The **Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory** *has a thirty-year history of providing research, development, training and technical assistance to schools and community-based agencies.*

The **Southern Regional Council** *works to promote racial justice, protect democratic rights, and broaden civic participation. Prior to the LEARNS partnership, SRC provided training and technical assistance to directors of education-based programs.*

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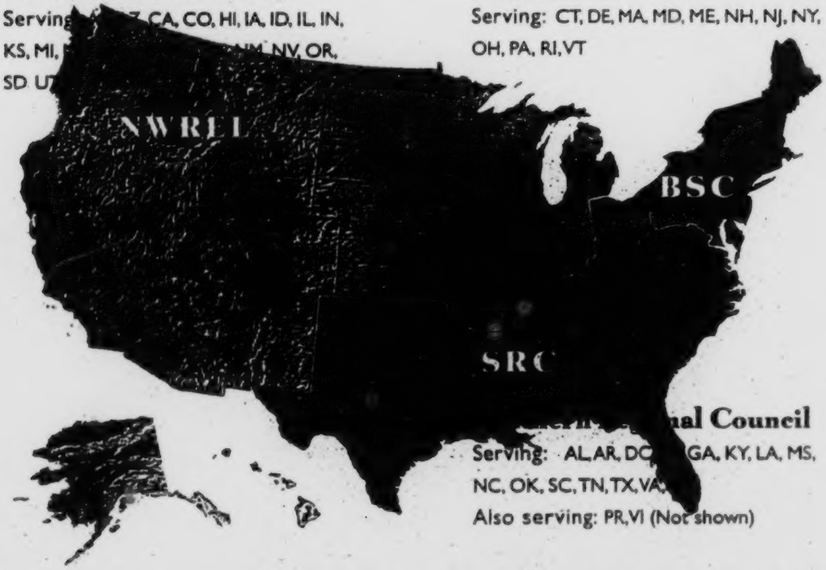

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The LEARNS partners provide training and technical assistance to America Reads and other Corporation for National Service projects focused on literacy and education. If you're looking for help, call the LEARNS partner serving your state at the numbers listed below.

Services

You can also take advantage of the following additional services:

- Read *The Tutor*, a quarterly newsletter with news and tips from the field and featuring monographs that address effective literacy practices.
- Check out the LEARNS Web site with downloadable resources, innovative practices, and timely conversations from the field (**www.nwrel.org/learns**).
- Participate in a series of three-day, in-depth literacy training events with companion guides and videos designed to meet the needs of national service programs and their constituents: volunteers, directors, coordinators, school partners, etc. Call the LEARNS partner serving your area for more information.
- Discuss multi-site, cross-stream training possibilities provided by LEARNS partners and peer experts.

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tacts: Amy Blake, Leslie Haynes, cy Henry, & Debra Howell	**Contacts:** Judith Gold, Emma Lanier, & Clarissa Wilder	**Contacts:** Robyn Davis, Gale Greenlee, Marcia Klenbort, & Tenera McPherson
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Putting Research to Use

Activities that Help Children Read

The Tutor, Fall 1998 Special Supplement

LEARNS–Linking Education and America Reads through National Service

by Amy Blake, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

How do you make sense of all the research on how children learn to read? Do you struggle to connect research with the work you do each week helping children learn to read and write? Here, you'll find summaries of research on 13 core understandings about learning to read, from *Building a Knowledge Base in Reading* by Jane Braunger and Jan Patricia Lewis. Each core understanding is followed by activity ideas and strategies you can share with your tutors. Modify them to fit your program needs, combine them with your tutors' experiences, or take them as is. No matter how you adapt this information, you'll be putting research to use!

1 *Reading is a construction of meaning from written text. It is an active, cognitive, and affective process.*

- ***The research says:*** Reading print involves recognizing individual letters and words as well as comprehending how words work together to tell a story. To read and comprehend a story, children must be actively involved–thinking about people in the story, talking about what may happen next, looking at pictures, acting out events. By engaging in this process of reading, children develop general reading and decoding strategies (see *decode* in Terms to Know, pg. 4), build on existing vocabulary, form critical thinking skills, and improve social skills.

- ***Put it to use!*** When you read to or with a child, engage her[1]: Ask her about pictures and how they relate to the story. Have her speculate about what will happen next and why. Ask open-ended questions that encourage her to use her imagination. Keep a list of words she knows by sight (*sight words*, pg. 4), in a reading journal. As she learns more words, add them to the list. Refer back to it periodically, and congratulate her on knowing so many words!

2 *Background knowledge and prior experience are critical to the reading process.*

- ***The research says:*** The foundations of literacy are laid early, some studies suggest before birth! But not all children get one-on-one attention or experience literacy-rich environments needed to build school success and self-confidence. Marilyn Adams, in *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print*, estimates that some children begin first grade with 1,000–1,700 hours of one-on-one picture book reading time, while others average only about 25 hours. The interaction, conversations, reading, and other activities of one-on-one tutoring give children experiences that help develop background knowledge and self-confidence necessary to become successful readers.

- ***Put it to use!*** In the first tutoring session, talk to the child about his past literacy experiences. Talk to him about other experiences, interests, and things he'd like to know more about. Even if the teacher has given you background information, having a direct conversation with the child helps build a trusting relationship. These conversations will also help you choose books and activities to use later. As one activity, have the child draw a picture of his house, showing the location of all the tools of literacy: pens, pencils, paints, grocery lists, photos, books, artwork, his own drawings on the refrigerator. Share a picture of your own.

3 *Social interaction is essential to learning to read.*

- ***The research says:*** Oral storytelling is an important part of many cultures and traditions, from passing down family history to telling ghost stories. Children's storytelling gives insight into what they think about and how they interpret events. In the context of tutoring, having conversations and participating in stories of all kinds give children chances to practice important literacy behaviors and form a significant relationship with an adult.

- ***Put it to use!*** Play "pass the story" either as an oral or written activity. You begin the story with a fantastic premise; for example: "When I awoke this morning, my bed was in the middle of a desert that stretched to the end of the earth." Pass the story to the child, who "writes" the next few sentences of the plot. Trade the story back and forth, asking questions and encouraging imaginative developments. As a group, children can act out the story using props and costumes.

  If your project involves service learning, conversations and storytelling provide ways of reflecting on service. Children can tell the story of their service project individually or in groups; orally; by writing a play or skit; or in various drawing and art projects–all of which can be told, performed, or displayed for classmates, parents, and the community.

4 *Reading and writing develop together.*

- ***The research says:*** Language skills–reading, writing, speaking–develop together as children begin to understand and interpret the world. Developing readers and writers need encouragement and space to explore the possibilities of language. Many studies, including one by the National Research Council's Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children, show that by supporting invented spelling, teachers, parents, and tutors can see a child's sense of phonics and how it develops.

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[1] These activities were created with one-on-one tutoring in mind but can be adapted to other projects. To address the gender pronoun issue (he/she), we have chosen to alternate pronouns in each scenario.

Help America Read: A Handbook for Volunteers
GaySu Pinnell and Irene C. Fountas
Written as a companion piece to the guide above, this handbook specifically addresses the needs and concerns of volunteers.
This handbook offers:

- Basic information on phonics and fluency
- Sample lessons
- Time management tips
- Multicultural books lists

To order, contact: Heinemann; (800) 793-2154, (800) 847-0938 (fax), e-mail: custserv@heinemann.com; http://www.heinemann.com

Help a Child Learn to Read
Judy Blankenship Cheatham, Ph.D.
Written for the beginning literacy tutor, this manual provides explicit information on the reading process as well as specifics on the essential components of tutoring sessions.
This manual offers:

- Answers to commonly asked questions about tutoring logistics (duration, meeting times, materials) and reading strategies (decoding words, comprehension, fluency in reading)
- Techniques used in collaborative tutoring sessions, including: language experiences, sight words and context clues, phonics, word patterns, learning styles.

To order, contact: Literacy Volunteers of America; (800) 582-8812, (315) 472-0002 (fax)

The Reading Team: A Handbook for Volunteer Tutors K-3
Lesley Mandel Morrow and Barbara J. Walker
Following the metaphor of tutor as coach, this handbook helps tutors to clarify the role they will play and the strategies they can use.
This handbook offers:

- Tips on establishing relationships with children and discussing reading with children
- Ideas for planning tutoring sessions
- Information on measuring student success and evaluating tutor progress

To order, contact: International Reading Association, (800) 336-READ ext.266; (302) 731-1057 (fax), e-mail: books@reading.org; http://www.ira.org

On the Road to Reading: A Guide for Community Partners
Derry Koralek and Ray Collins
This guide outlines essential skills needed to implement literacy development programs. Much of the basic information provided will help programs in the start-up phase of implementation.
This guide offers:

- Information on the reading process and general tutoring strategies
- Information on building partnerships with families and schools
- Profiles of successful programs

To order, contact: Jennifer Gartin, ETR Associates, (800) 860-2684, ext. 142; (408) 438-3618 (fax); e-mail: jennifer@etr-associates.org

Reading Helpers: A Handbook for Training Tutors

Ray Collins

Written as a companion volume to *On the Road to Reading*, this handbook focuses on training literacy tutors.

This handbook offers:

- A variety of tutoring tips and training activities to illuminate and enliven tutoring sessions.
- Eleven training sessions (described in detailed and accompanied by helpful handouts)

To order, contact: Jennifer Gartin, ETR Associates, (800) 860-2684, ext. 142; 408-438-3618 (fax) ; e-mail: jennifer@etr-associates.org (no cost)

Volunteers Working with Young Readers

Lester L. Laminack

Written for the novice volunteer, this manual provides an overview of the reading process, addresses key concerns, suggests appropriate books and materials, and describes reading strategies.

This manual offers:

- Responses to the challenges literacy volunteers encounter
- Activities for sessions, ranging from creating radio plays to writing secret messages
- Specific methods for helping children to become independent readers and writers
- Example situations to illustrate reading and tutoring concepts and to help tutors understand children's varying reading behaviors and attitudes toward books
- Principles in practice sections that connect theoretical ideas with tutoring practice
- Actual transcripts of children's responses to books
- An extensive appendix lists books for children, both by theme and reading level.

To order, contact: National Council of Teachers of English, (800) 369-6283; e-mail: orders@ncte.org; http://www.ncte.org

Barbara A. Wasik

Using volunteers as reading tutors: Guidelines for successful practices

Several components are essential to the success of tutoring programs in reading.

The America Reads Challenge in the U.S. makes a national commitment to the goal that every child will read independently and well by the end of the third grade. One of the initiatives proposed to achieve this goal is to use volunteers to tutor children in schools. As many as one million tutors will be working with children to help them learn to read.

Using volunteers in schools is not a new concept. Many schools use parents and community volunteers to strengthen existing programs and to provide additional support to schools. However, in recent years, as funds for schools have become increasingly scarce, volunteers have been called on to perform tasks typically done by paid staff.

Although volunteers can never replace certified teachers, they can provide a needed service if they are used effectively. Of course, volunteers can simply read with children from time to time, but this alone is unlikely to make a substantial difference in children's reading performance. To have an important impact on the reading skills of at-risk students, volunteers need a well-developed, structured tutoring program, as well as high-quality training and supervision. The purpose of this article is to suggest guidelines for schools or community organizations that are developing volunteer tutoring programs to help young children who are at risk for reading failure. These guidelines are based on evidence from well-researched, effective tutoring programs.

What is the America Reads Challenge?

The America Reads Challenge Act of 1997 is the Clinton administration's effort to respond to the literacy problem faced by America's children. The goal of this proposed legislation is to support schools and families in teaching all children to read. The America Reads Challenge legislation has two main components: (a) the America's Reading Corps, which includes the volunteer tutoring component, and (b) the Parents as First Teachers grant, which would support effective programs to assist parents in promoting their children's early literacy. Of the proposed US$2.75 billion, the legislation allocates the majority of the funds to place one million volunteers to tutor students in reading.

The guidelines for the America Reads Challenge legislation propose that a local reading partnership be established between at least two agencies or organizations. One of the organizations must be a public school or a school district and the other organization can be a library, literacy group, museum, or youth service group, among others. The proposed legislation

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(pp. 562–570)

Community volunteers deliver tutoring services to at-risk students. Photo by Florence Sharp

requires that each volunteer reading program (a) use qualified and trained volunteers, (b) target areas with a high number or percentage of children from low-income families or with the greatest need of reading assistance, (c) support in-school reading programs, and (d) involve parents in the reading process. However, it is unclear in the legislation how these recommendations will be translated into practice.

According to the legislation, 70% of the US$2.75 billion would be allocated to the states, according to the Title I formula, and 30% would be awarded competitively based on the quality of the state plans.

As of this writing, the U.S. Congress has not passed the America Reads Challenge legislation. Both the Senate and the House are examining and discussing the initiative thoroughly, and it is likely that the legislation will be modified before it becomes law.

What do we know about volunteers?

Before we begin a discussion about tutoring, it would be helpful to understand what we know about volunteers in schools. Although it is a widely held belief that the participation of volunteers in schools is positive and beneficial, surprisingly little is known about school-based volunteerism (Michael, 1990). Data from large surveys do provide some information about the characteristics of volunteers and the schools in which they volunteer (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996; Michael, 1990) but provide little information about the effects of their volunteer work.

We do know that with the increasing number of women in the workforce, the typical school volunteer is no longer primarily a mother of school-aged children, but a senior citizen or a college student (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996). The highest percentage of volunteers are in elementary schools, where about 50% of their activities are in areas of instructional support such as tutoring, grading papers, and monitoring class assignments. Other activities include involvement in extracurricular activities, in management support, and in clerical services to schools. The typical volunteer contributes about 3 hours a week to a school. Unfortunately, schools with the greatest need of volunteers, such as high-poverty schools, are less likely to have volunteers than are more affluent schools (Michael, 1990).

Given that the America Reads Challenge will provide a small stipend to some volunteers and will target high-poverty schools, this may help to increase the amount of volunteer time and to increase volunteer participation in schools where there is great need for additional support.

One-to-one tutoring is one of the most effective forms of instruction.

What do we know about tutoring?

One-to-one tutoring is one of the most effective forms of instruction (Bloom, 1981). In a tutoring session, a tutor has the opportunity to tailor the instruction to meet the specific needs of each child. This individual attention is often difficult to orchestrate in a classroom of 25 to 30 children. A review of research on reading tutoring for first graders has found substantial positive effects on end-of-the-year reading measures (Wasik & Slavin, 1993). This review also found that certified teachers are more effective than paraprofessionals in working with children. However, there is much less research on the effectiveness of volunteer programs on students' achievement (see Wasik, in press).

Our understanding of tutoring has been greatly influenced by four well-researched tutoring programs: Reading Recovery and Success for All (which use certified teachers as tutors) and the Howard Street Tutoring Program and Book Buddies (which use community volunteers as tutors). I selected these programs because Reading Recovery, Success for All, and the Howard Street Tutoring Program have been rigorously evaluated in comparison to control groups. Book Buddies is included because it is based on the Howard Street Tutoring Model and has been disseminated more widely than the Howard Street Program. Although each of these programs has a unique theoretical perspective on reading and reading problems, they do have similarities that, when examined, provide us with an understanding of the components necessary for effective tutoring programs.

One of the most influential tutoring programs is Reading Recovery, a program for at-risk first graders originally developed in New Zealand (see Pinnell, DeFord, & Lyons, 1988). This program, currently in more than 6,000 U.S. schools, has excellent evidence of effectiveness for first graders who receive it. However, Reading Recovery is expensive to implement because it uses certified teachers as tutors. The success of Reading Recovery, and its expense, have led reading researchers and educators to search for a less expensive means of producing similar outcomes. Several of the volunteer programs being used today, such as Book Buddies, include components that are based on Reading Recovery. In fact, Reading Recovery researchers are training AmeriCorp volunteers to work with children who are less at risk than those served by Reading Recovery.

Another influential tutoring program is a part of Success for All (Slavin, Madden, Dolan, & Wasik, 1996), a schoolwide reading model used in about 800 mostly high-poverty schools. Success for All provides curriculum reforms, schoolwide professional development, and family support services, in addition to one-to-one tutoring from certified teachers and paraprofessionals for the lowest achieving first, second, and third graders. Like Reading Recovery, Success for All is expensive, primarily because the tutors are certified teachers.

The Howard Street Tutoring Program (Morris, Shaw, & Perney, 1990) is a small community-based volunteer tutoring program that was established in Chicago in 1979 and is still in existence today. The program provides volunteer services to second- and third-grade students who are having difficulty in reading. Unlike Reading Recovery and Success for All, the Howard Street Tutoring Program recruits community volunteers to deliver tutoring services to at-risk students. Tutoring is done after school in a community center, although the model could be adapted as a pull-out program during the school day.

Book Buddies is a volunteer one-to-one tutoring program designed to provide low-cost services to first graders who are having difficulty learning to read (Invernizzi, Juel, & Rosemary, 1997; Invernizzi, Rosemary, Juel, & Richards, 1997). It is based on many of the components of the Howard Street Tutoring Program. This program has been implemented in six Charlottesville, Virginia, USA, schools. Volunteers are recruited from the community. This program, like Reading Recovery and Success for All, mainly provides pull-out services but could be adapted for use after school.

All four of these programs—Reading Recovery, Success for All, the Howard Street Tutoring Program, and Book Buddies—share seven of eight common components that seem essential to making tutoring programs effective. Evidence from Success for All suggests the eighth component. These components, if all are put in place, could ensure a systematic and effective approach to developing volunteer tutoring programs. Following are a list of these components, a description of each, and a discussion of their importance.

1. A certified reading specialist needs to supervise tutors. One of the most important aspects of a successful volunteer program is the coordination of the program by a teacher who is a certified reading specialist, a teacher who is knowledgeable about reading and problems in reading. This teacher becomes the core of the program. In the Howard Street Tutoring Program (Morris et al., 1990) and Book Buddies (Invernizzi, Rosemary, et al., 1997) a reading specialist supervises the volunteers on a daily basis, assesses the children, develops lesson plans for the volunteers to implement, and gathers the materials that the tutors need in order to carry out the lesson plan. In addition, the reading specialist can observe volunteers and provide them with constant feedback and support as they work with the students.

The most important function of the reading specialist is the development of lesson plans for the volunteers to follow. Unlike the volunteers, the reading specialist has the knowledge to assess and diagnose the children's reading problems and determine what concepts and skills need to be addressed. The reading specialist can use such knowledge to develop a detailed diagnosis and tutoring plan, which allows the volunteers to understand the specific problems a child is having and, more importantly, what strategies and techniques the volunteers need to implement in order to have a positive impact on the children. In addition, the reading specialist teaches the volunteers about reading and about children who have problems reading.

In programs such as Reading Recovery (Pinnell et al., 1988) and Success for All (Slavin et al., 1996), the tutors, who are certified teachers, already have the skills that reading specialists must impart to the volunteers. The certified teacher, because of his or her expertise and training, makes online decisions regarding the specific problems that will be addressed in the tutoring session and follows a plan that he or she developed based on the ongoing work with the child.

Schools that are trying to implement a tutoring program on a shoestring budget may plan to do it without a reading specialist as a supervisor. However, based on evidence from effective programs, this would greatly reduce the effectiveness of volunteer tutors. Without the supervision of a reading specialist, volunteers are unlikely to have the guidance or skills they need to tutor effectively.

Without the supervision of a reading specialist, volunteers are unlikely to have the guidance or skills they need to tutor effectively.

2. Tutors need ongoing training and feedback. Volunteer tutors need ongoing training and feedback. A model for this training and feedback is provided by the Howard Street Tutoring Program (Morris, 1993) and Book Buddies (Invernizzi, Rosemary, et al. 1997). In both of these programs, an experienced reading specialist is always present during the tutoring sessions. This reading expert observes the tutors while they are working with the children and provides immediate feedback. If the volunteer is working on phonemic awareness skills, for example, and is having difficulty understanding the concept or is having problems understanding or initiating a strategy that was outlined in the lesson plan, the reading specialist can answer these questions and provide immediate explanations to help the volunteer understand these concepts.

Volunteers also need to be trained to have a basic understanding of the reading process. Being able to read does not necessarily mean understanding the complex processes that are involved in learning to read. Not only do volunteers need the practical input from the reading specialist as they are tutoring, but they also need background information regarding reading and how young children learn. This can be done in small-group training sessions. A basic understanding of concepts of print, decoding vs. sight-word learning, and common problems that new and inexperienced readers share is essential for new tutors to learn in order to be effective.

In addition to training, tutors need opportunities to share their own ideas with the reading specialist as well as with other volunteers. For example, two volunteers may be working with a child and having similar problems, but one has found a strategy that is working. If the volunteers can share their experiences, this can help the learning process.

3. Tutoring sessions need to be structured and contain basic elements. Although each of the four effective programs has its own unique approach to teaching reading, the following components were consistently found in each of the program's tutoring sessions.

Rereading a familiar story or text. In all four of the tutoring programs, rereading a familiar story or other easy connected text is a part of the tutoring session. This activity is called rereading or contextual reading. The child may read to the tutor a book he or she has already mastered in a previous tutoring session or a book from class or a favorite book from home. Rereading familiar text provides children the opportunity to practice fluency in reading, work on automaticity in word recognition (Samuels, 1979), and improve comprehension (Rasinski, 1990). Rereading material that the child has rehearsed also provides the opportunity for the child to use strategies almost automatically while primarily focusing on the meaning of the text (Pinnell, 1989). In rereading familiar stories, children also have the opportunity to be successful in their reading, which starts the tutoring session off with a positive tone and contributes to students' motivation to read more and feel good about themselves as readers.

Word analysis. Although word analysis can have various meanings depending on the theoretical orientation of the program, the common goal in word analysis activities is to have the child focus on the orthographic structure of a word. In Reading Recovery, a variety of activities teaches children to attend to the letters in a word, hear and record sounds in a word, and link sound sequences with letter sequences (Clay, 1993a). For example, children have numerous opportunities to write words, to "make and break" words using magnetic letters, and to segment words in order to hear the individual sounds. A segmentation activity, for example, might have the teacher indicating a complete word and the child finding the breaks in the words such as inflections, syllables, and onset and rime.

In the Howard Street Tutoring Program and Book Buddies, the tutors use "word study" techniques (Invernizzi, Rosemary, et al., 1997; Morris, 1982), which consist of word bank activities and phonics. The word bank is a collection of words that the child can readily identify, which helps the child build a sight and decodable word vocabulary and promote the understanding of the concept of a word. In the phonics portion, children categorize or sort words based on beginning consonants, word families, and eventually more complex attributes such as blends and digraphs (see Bear, Invernizzi, & Templeton, 1996; Morris, 1982).

In Success for All (Wasik & Madden, 1996), activities emphasize letter-sound relationships, syllable segmentation, and building a sight word and decodable word base. Success for All uses minibooks with decodable text, which introduce consonants, vowels, and sound-blending strategies. Students are taught the decoding skills needed to read these books.

In all of these programs, word analysis is done both in isolation and also in the context of reading text. During tutoring, children have the opportunity to practice words they know, learn new words, and understand the meaning of new words.

Writing. In all of these programs, writing is an integral part of tutoring in reading. Writing activities provide children the opportunity to see the relationship between reading and print. The writing process enables the child to attend to the visual details and to sort out letter-sound relationships. Writing activities are closely coordinated with words from the word analysis. That is, students write sentences or brief paragraphs using sight words and decodable words they are learning. Writing provides repeated opportunities to see the structure of words, to explore the coordination of sound and symbols, and to practice expressing ideas in words. Depending on the program's focus, the content of the writing is generated by the tutor, the child, or sometimes both.

Introducing new stories. After reading a familiar story, students in all four programs read a new story, such as one that has been recently introduced in their reading class or one that is appropriate to their current reading level. Reading a new story provides the child with the opportunity to practice reading both familiar and unfamiliar words, to build vocabulary skills, and to work on comprehension processing. The tutor starts by telling the child what the story is about and discussing the meanings of new words introduced in the story. Tutors model ways to anticipate the story content and vocabulary, such as asking questions about the title. The words in the new story frequently match the words learned in the word analysis. In reading new content, tutors often guide the children in figuring out new words by helping them with initial sounds or drawing attention to context clues. In addition, the tutors model effective strategies the child can use to help monitor comprehension processes. For example, the tutor may ask, "What do you do when you come to a word you don't understand?" encouraging the child to think about what word analysis or context clue strategy may be most effective. The goal is to have the child internalize both the comprehension and word analysis strategies so that he or she is able to implement these strategies automatically and independently. The child reads the new book until he or she is facile enough with the story for it to be used as a familiar book.

The tutor spends considerable time and energy modeling appropriate techniques and strategies for the child to use to read effectively. The better the tutors understand the process of reading, the more flexible and accurate they can be in determining what the child needs to work on in order to read words effectively and comprehend connected text.

A specific amount of time is allocated to each one of these activities during a tutoring session. For example, in a 20-minute Success for All tutoring session, 5 to 7 minutes is spent on rereading familiar stories, 2 minutes is spent on letter sounds and working with words in isolation, 5–7 minutes is spent on story-related writing, and 5–7 minutes is spent on rereading new stories. In the 45-minute session in the Book Buddies program, time is allocated in the following way: 10–15 minutes on rereading familiar stories, 10–12 minutes on word study, 5–10 minutes on writing for sounds, and 10–15 minutes introducing a new book. Each of these activities is a part of every tutoring session.

The tutor spends considerable time and energy modeling appropriate techniques and strategies for the child to use.

4. *Tutoring needs to be intensive and consistent.* Children should receive tutoring services a minimum of 1½ hours to 2 hours per week. At least this much is needed to ensure that children will benefit from the intervention. Programs such as Success for All and Reading Recovery tutor children 5 days a week for 20 and 30 minutes, respectively, during the school day. In the Howard Street Tutoring Program, volunteers meet with children for an hour, four times a week after school. Book Buddies meet for 45 minutes during school twice per week. However, most volunteer programs provided tutoring sessions 1 hour twice a week or 40 minutes three times a week. Obviously, the more time a child has to work on a skill, the more opportunity there is to master it. However, volunteers often have a limited amount of time, and the expectations for the amount of tutor time need to be reasonable so the volunteers can realistically keep the commitment.

Consistency is also important. A child should be tutored by the same tutor every week. This allows the child and the volunteer to build a relationship. After repeated sessions with the same volunteer, the child begins to trust the tutor, is less likely to be afraid to admit that he or she doesn't understand something, and becomes motivated to try to perform well for a valued person. The tutor, after repeated sessions and training, comes to know and understand the children with whom he or she is working. The tutor's ability to measure progress, to know what skills need to be addressed, and to understand the specific needs of the child is enhanced by working consistently with the same child. Finally, having the same volunteer tutor the same child causes less confusion and brings more stability to the program structure for both the volunteer and the child.

5. *Quality materials are needed to facilitate the tutoring model.* Children learn to read by reading. It is essential for volunteer tutors to have books, especially little books and easy-to-read stories for the children to read. This is a key component to the success of any tutoring program, yet it is frequently neglected, usually because of cost.

Success for All and Reading Recovery provide books that match the objectives of each tutoring session. Book Buddies uses a variety of easy-to-read trade books. These programs also use books that are common in class libraries as well as trade books.

In addition to books, tutors need basic materials such as paper, markers, sentence strips, and other materials to implement the essential components in the tutoring session. In schools where budgets are tight, the most inexpensive supplies can be hard to provide. The school, in making the commitment to use volunteers, needs to be willing to provide the basic materials necessary for tutoring.

6. *Assessment of students needs to be ongoing.* To ensure the success of the student in tutoring, assessment needs to take place regularly. In Reading Recovery and Success for All, students are assessed continually. This assessment process helps the tutors be aware of changing needs and allows the tutors to adjust what occurs in tutoring based on the students' needs. In Reading Recovery, tutors use the Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1993b), which includes letter identification, concepts of print, word tests, dictation, text reading, and writing, to assess the student's reading skills and knowledge about text and reading. In the daily tutoring sessions, the tutors take running records of the student's reading ability, which provides an online assessment of reading behavior. On all of these assessments, the tutor's judgment and observation are considered to be more important than the scores derived from the measures (Pinnell et al., 1988).

In Success for All, a formal assessment of the student's reading is administered every 6 weeks to determine each student's individual skills, such as letter and sound knowledge, concepts of print, individual word identification, text reading, and phonemic awareness (Slavin et al., 1996). An analysis of children's oral reading is done weekly. Tutors observe and analyze the types of strategies children use and the kinds of errors made in reading. In addition to this more formal assessment, in both programs, the expertise of the tutors allows for constant assessment of the students' abilities as the tutors work with them.

In the Howard Street Tutoring Program and Book Buddies, the reading specialist conducts ongoing assessments and modifies lesson plans accordingly. The assessment consists of knowledge of alphabet, phonemic awareness, spelling, concept of word, word recognition, and text reading (Johnston, Juel, & Invernizzi, 1995). With ongoing assessment, the reading specialist can constantly modify the strategies he or she suggests that the volunteer use, adjust the difficulty of reading material, and tailor the lesson plans to meet students' changing needs.

All four programs share some common features in their assessment processes. First, assessment provides essential information to modify and tailor lesson content to individual student needs. Second, for all programs the assessment process includes some measures of oral reading, concepts of print, word analysis, and phonemic awareness. In all of these programs, the assessment is aligned with the skills and concepts presented in the tutoring sessions. For example, in Success for All tutoring, there is an emphasis on letter-sound relationships in understanding words, and this is emphasized in the assessment. In Book Buddies and the Howard Street Tutoring Program, the assessment includes word recognition, which is tied to the word analysis component of the tutoring session. Finally, the assessment is linked to tutor training. The more knowledgeable the tutors are about the process of reading and how children learn to read, the better equipped they are to make ongoing informal analyses of the student's reading behavior and provide helpful feedback to the student.

7. *Schools need to find ways to ensure that tutors will attend regularly.* Schools need to work with local volunteer agencies to develop incentive plans to ensure that volunteers come to tutoring consistently and frequently. AmeriCorp and SeniorCorp volunteers are paid a small stipend. In Book Buddies, some volunteers are released from their jobs to tutor. In addition, volunteers can be given considerable recognition in schools to celebrate their efforts. Often, community organizations such as supermarkets and local restaurants provide incentives for the volunteers as a way to reward them for their service. Volunteers need to be appreciated if they are expected to make long-term commitments.

8. *Tutoring needs to be coordinated with classroom instruction.* Coordination between tutoring and classroom instruction is beneficial to the child. It is easier for a child who is struggling with learning to read to receive the same method of reading instruction with the same or similar materials in the classroom and during tutoring. If the tutor works with the child on some of the same stories that were presented in class, the child has repeated opportunities to work on challenging materials. An at-risk child has enough trouble learning one approach in reading without having to juggle or reconcile two different approaches. As the child masters material, he or she is more likely to perform better in class and is likely to become motivated to read. This is not to say that the tutoring session should be the mirror image of what is done in class. During tutoring, the tutor can present strategies and provide explanations for things that the struggling reader is not likely to get from class. In Success for All, for example, tutoring is closely aligned with classroom instruction, and teachers and tutors have a system for communicating about student successes and concerns.

Conclusion

The America Reads Challenge could contribute to the success of thousands of children who are struggling in early reading. However, if volunteers are to make a difference, schools must commit to developing and implementing programs that support both the success of the child and the success of the volunteer. Any tutoring program can provide the tutor with a rewarding, positive experience and can provide the child with a valued mentor and friend. However, to have tutoring result in real gains in students' reading skills, more structure, training, supervision, and planning are needed. Schools must make a strong philosophical commitment, as well as a financial one, to ensure that tutors are given the training and assistance they need. Untrained volunteers might discourage struggling readers and even cause harm by their inexperience. With adaquate support and structure, however, volunteer tutoring programs can result in meaningful benefits in the lives of at-risk children.

Author notes

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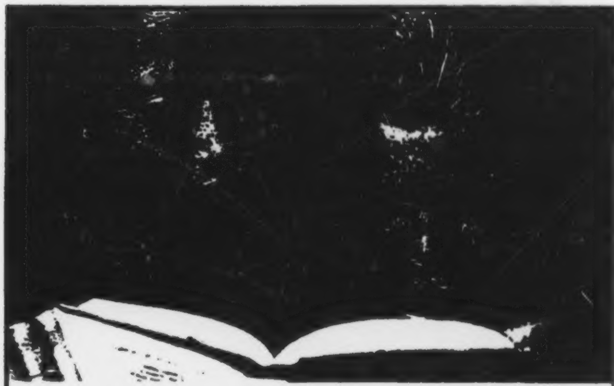

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Para-education: Teamwork that Leads to Success!

Karen A. Schmidt and Rose Miller
Paraprofessional Development
NWREL

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

Reading Publication Overview of Paraprofessional Presentation

Imagine a waiting room in a medical office full of patients. The doctor comes out and takes each patient's blood pressure, temperature, and draws blood. You would wonder why the doctor was not using skilled physician assistants to carry out these tasks. Consider also if a surgeon needed to go to the scene of each bad car accident rather than have experienced emergency medical technicians render initial treatment before transport to a trauma center. Or ponder the consequences if an attorney needed to type his own motions, prepare deposition meeting times, or photocopy reams of briefs. The paralegal is an essential team member of the legal profession and the judicial system would be more clogged than it is now if not for these highly skilled legal assistants. As outrageous as these examples might be, consider the school teacher today who is asked to optimally and individually instruct a diverse group of students. There would be no way for medicine or law to efficiently function without the use of highly trained paraprofessionals. In the same way, the education establishment needs to look at the major impact well-trained paraeducators could make on students' lives.

Just as it requires time to train the physician assistant to perform various medical tests and procedures, freeing the physician to concentrate on those procedures which call for more experience, so the paraeducator's expertise allows the teacher to expend energy on those students who require more concentrated help. The teacher can more effectively address each student's individual needs and the paraeducator is making a real and satisfying difference in students' lives. The bottom line is that all students are the winners in this collaborative effort.

Linda Darling-Hammond, a leading voice in education reform, has stated: "Research indicates that the most important determinant of student achievement is teachers' qualifications and expertise." Haselkorn & Fideler documented results in a 1996 national comprehensive study which found that the inclusion of paraprofessionals into quality teacher training programs has educational implications and advantages. Genzuk (1997) and Genzuk & Baca (1998) suggest that well-prepared paraeducator-to-teacher program graduates bring a wealth of community and student knowledge to their practice, attributes that are highly regarded in today's diverse classrooms.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) in Portland, Oregon is part of the Regional Educational Laboratory Program, the U.S. Department of Education's largest research and development investment. It is designed to help educators, policymakers, and communities improve schools and help all students attain their full potential. NWREL serves the Northwest region, including Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. The Planning and Program Development unit of NWREL has made a recent commitment to paraeducator professional training. Karen Schmidt, Paraprofessional Development Specialist, will be the contact at NWREL for this work and may be reached at 800-547-6339. As research-based guidelines, policies, and training are formulated, paraeducator development assistance from NWREL will be available through conferences, instruction at ESDs or schools, booklets, videos, and other means.

Purposeful use of paraeducators includes providing them with clear objectives which are coordinated with the mission of the school. This requires an initial and continuing investment in training which will pay off handsomely. The goal is to take every student wherever they are and assist them to advance as far as possible. The wise use of paraprofessionals to maximize individualized instruction helps each child succeed!

PARAEDUCATORS

The doctor takes care of a waiting room full of patients with *no* help at all.

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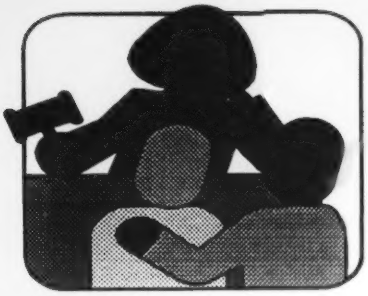
Planning and Program Development



PARAEDUCATORS

The attorney does all the pretrial preparation, including typing all motions.

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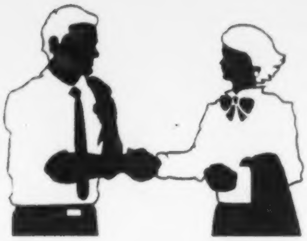
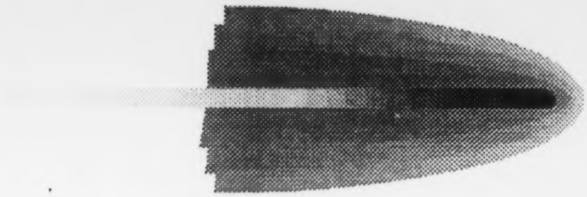
PARAEDUCATORS

The teacher tries to be *all* things to *all* students

and to offer individualized instruction.





PARAEDUCATORS

I *don't* have time to work with another adult!

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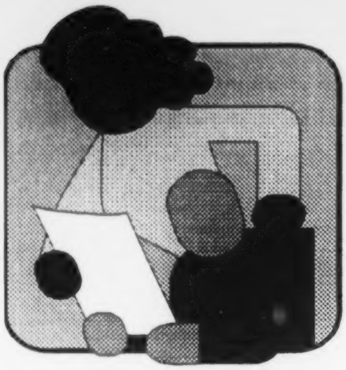
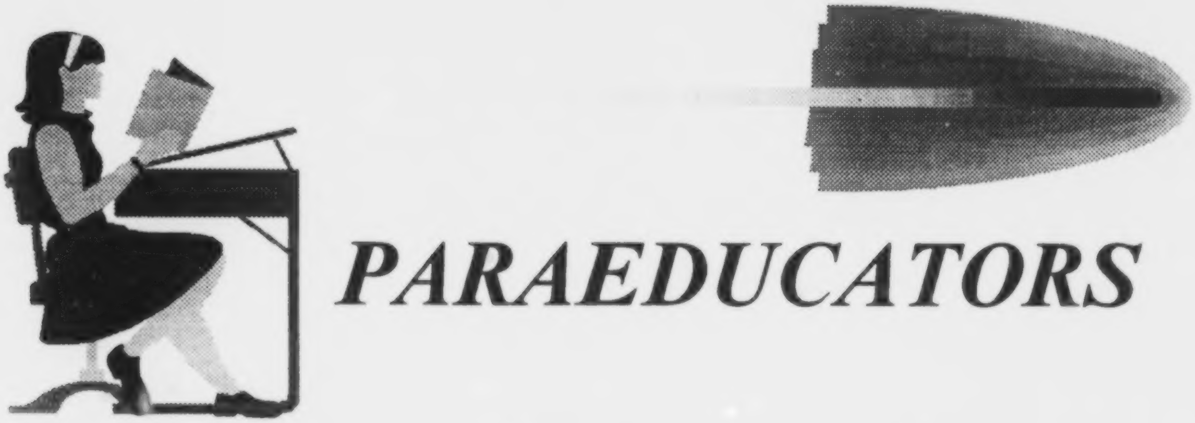


PARAEDUCATORS

Working as a team, the *teacher* can give more concentrated help, the *paraeducator* is making a real difference, and the *students* have the best opportunity to achieve the goals.



PARAEDUCATORS

Dr. Jeanne Chall, a professor at Harvard University, stated in 1998: "A common problem for children in the primary grades is weak word-recognition skills . . . Weak word-recognition skills can have an impact on children's reading comprehension."

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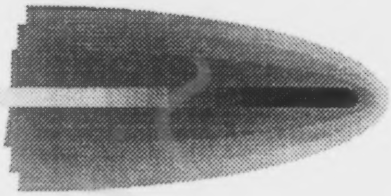

PARAEDUCATORS

To become a good reader, the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) suggests the following tutoring objectives:

1. *Children need to be fluent in using letter-sound relationships (phonics).*

2. *Children need to be fluent in using sight words.*

3. *Children need to be familiar with books and book language.*

PARAEDUCATORS

Phonics

Children need to learn how letters and groups of letters correspond to the different sounds that make up words.

Imagine if a musician tried to read an entire chord of music before learning the individual notes that make up the chord!

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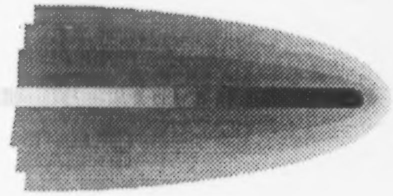
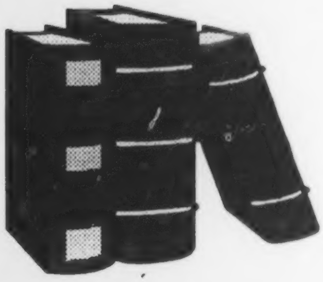
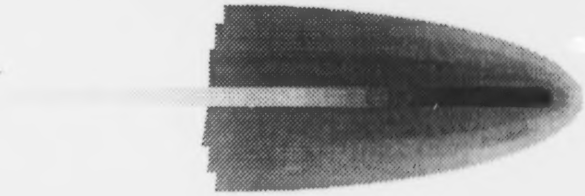




PARAEDUCATORS

BOOKS

Children need to learn how to handle books. They also need to learn how to use the context, such as the pictures, patterns, and meaning of stories to help them become successful readers.



PARAEDUCATORS

Paraprofessionals are a vast storehouse of knowledge and skills to be tapped. They are a valuable resource and it would be a waste not to utilize the wealth around you.

A PROBLEM SOLVING EXERCISE

1. Define the problem from the point of view of both the teacher and paraprofessional:

   a.

   b.

2. LIST attitudes and other factors that appear to contribute to the problem.

3. LIST attitudes and other factors the team can build on to find a successful solution of the problem.

4. DISCUSS and LIST desired goal(s) for the team.

5. LIST additional information, new skills, or other resources needed to implement the solution or to achieve the goal(s).

6. DESCRIBE specific techniques or strategies the team can use to achieve the goals.

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WASHINGTON CORE COMPETENCIES FOR PARAEDUCATORS

To work in education and related service programs for children and youth with disabilities, paraeducators will demonstrate:

1. Understanding the value of providing instructional and other direct services to all children and youth with disabilities;
2. Understanding the roles and responsibilities of certificated/licensed staff and paraeducators;
3. Knowledge of (a) patterns of human development and milestones typically achieved at different ages, and (b) risk factors that may prohibit or impede typical development;
4. Ability to practice ethical and professional standards of conduct, including the requirement of confidentiality;
5. Ability to communicate with colleagues, follow instructions, and use problem solving and other skills that will enable the paraeducator to work as an effective member of the instructional team;
6. Ability to provide positive behavioral support and management;
7. Knowledge of the legal issues related to the education of children and youth with disabilities and their families;
8. Awareness of diversity among the children, youth, families, and colleagues with whom they work;
9. Knowledge and application of the elements of effective instruction to assist teaching and learning as developed by the certificated/licensed staff in a variety of settings;
10. Ability to utilize appropriate strategies and techniques to provide instructional support in teaching and learning as developed by the certificated/licensed staff;
11. Ability to motivate and assist children and youth;
12. Knowledge of and ability to follow health, safety, and emergency procedures of the agency where they are employed;
13. Awareness of the ways in which technology can assist teaching and learning;
14. Awareness of personal care and/or health related support.

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PARAEDUCATORS

Imagine a waiting room in a medical office full of patients. The doctor comes out and individually takes each patient's blood pressure, temperature, and draws blood. You would wonder why the doctor was not using skilled physician assistants to carry out these tasks. Consider also if a surgeon needed to go to the scene of each bad car accident rather than have experienced emergency medical technicians render initial treatment before transport to a trauma center. Or ponder the consequences if an attorney needed to type his own motions, prepare deposition meeting times, or photocopy reams of briefs. The paralegal is an essential team member of the legal profession and the judicial system would be more clogged than it is now if not for these highly skilled legal assistants. As outrageous as these examples might be, consider the school teacher today who is asked to optimally and individually instruct a diverse group of students. There would be no way for medicine or law to efficiently function without the use of highly trained paraprofessionals. In the same way, the education establishment needs to look at the major impact well-trained paraeducators could make on students' lives.

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Karen Schmidt, Paraprofessional Development Specialist, will be the contact at NWREL for this work. She may be reached at 800-547-6339, x552 and would welcome and value your input. The goal is to find out where there are successful paraeducator programs (which produce improved and excellent student learning), investigate those models and then provide information to others on how to duplicate these successful practices.

Probably one of the major frustrations of teachers is that they simply do not have time to deal with another adult in the classroom - they already have their hands filled with trying to teach a large class. Just having a "warm body" in the classroom is not only ineffective, but often a distraction. There are schools though that have encouraged and developed a collaborative relationship between teachers and paraeducators. Experience has shown that this initial investment in training will pay major dividends for the teacher, the paraeducator, and the students.

Just as it requires time to train the physician assistant to perform various medical tests and procedures which frees the physician to concentrate on those procedures which call for more experience, so the paraeducator's expertise allows the teacher to expend energy on those students who require more concentrated help. The teacher can more effectively address each student's individual needs, the paraeducator is making a real and satisfying difference in students' lives, and the bottom line, of course, is that all students are the winners in this collaborative effort.

Another issue focuses on the teacher shortage, especially in such areas as bilingual education and special education. There are paraeducators who are dedicated, extremely knowledgeable, and committed to their community. Some innovative programs in the country are offering these paraprofessionals the opportunity to gain the education to become certified teachers.

Purposeful use of paraeducators includes providing them with clear objectives which are coordinated with the mission of the school. This requires an initial and continuing investment in training which will pay off handsomely. The goal is to take every student wherever they are and assist them to advance as far as possible. The wise use of paraprofessionals to maximize individualized instruction so that each child may achieve their potential makes everyone a winner!

CASE STUDY ONE

PARAPROFESSIONAL:

I am Anne Newsome, and I have been working as a paraeducator for the past three months. I have a high school diploma, and I was married soon after I graduated. My two children are now in high school and I wanted a job so that my kids can go to college. I really like working with kids and have been active in the school, was a Girl Scout Leader and taught in our local Sunday School. In fact, there was a boy in my class who had a learning problem and I liked to find ways to make him feel like he was part of the group.

When I took this job, I was briefed on district policy about salary, fringe benefits, working hours, vacation, etc. Also, I was told about the chain of command in the schools, and the supervisor very briefly described my role and responsibilities as a paraprofessional. I was told that Mr. Norton would be the classroom teacher I would work with, and that I would meet him when I reported to work. The supervisor said that Mr. Norton would give me information about the specific jobs I would be expected to perform, and the methods and strategies he would expect me to use to do the job.

From the first day I walked into the classroom we have never had a formal discussion about what he expects me to do; there is always some reason why we can't sit down and talk. We can never meet during his prep periods because he is always too busy doing lesson plans to talk to me about them. When I asked if we could meet after school, he told me that this is impossible because he either has graduate classes to get to, or there are meetings of the Board; and then on one of the days when he was "free" I really had to get home to see about one of my children who was sick.

So, just before he does something in the class, he will say, "Anne, take this group and follow my plans." Now, I have no idea about what to do, except to try to do what I see him doing while I sit in the back of the room watching him teach the lessons as he has asked me to do. Some of the words he uses don't make any sense to me. When I am "teaching," he often breaks into what I am doing and corrects me, right in front of the students. I never know in advance what he wants me to do, or exactly how he wants it done because he seems to do something different with each student. I don't have the guts to tell him how this makes me feel—so I save it up until I get home, and my family gets it all.

But what has really worried me is what this might be doing to my ability to work well with the students, because I am always being talked down to. Today it came to a head when he had to leave the room and I was left alone with the group. I asked one of the students who is hard to work with to join us for an activity. He answered by looking straight at me and saying, "No, I don't want to, and I don't have to because you don't know your job, and you can't tell me what to do." I wanted to cry and quit right then—but I didn't. Where do I go from here?

TEACHER

I am Ken Norton, a sixth grade teacher. I majored in English in my undergraduate studies. I've been assigned my first paraprofessional after teaching for twelve years. This was done because several limited English proficiency (LEP) students were assigned to my class. I wish they had asked me whether I wanted someone or not because I am really a loner and have very strict rules about how things are to be done in my classroom. I've never worked with anyone before, and I'm not really sure that I think it is worth the time to plan for another adult in the classroom, especially someone who is not trained to be a teacher, much less to work with LEP students.

At any rate, this woman walked into my room three months ago, just before school began, and said she was Anne Newsome, the paraprofessional assigned to me. I asked her if she had been told what her duties were and she informed me that they had been explained to her at a meeting at the district office. I wish they would have told me what I could expect her to do, because I have no idea what goes on in those "briefing" sessions nor have I seen a copy of a job description. I asked her to sit in the back of the room for a while so she could get the hang of how I work. I told her that we'd get together when I had some free time to talk to her, and that I would tell her what her specific duties would be and what I would like her to do.

During the first few days, I was never able to make the time to talk to her. I had to do some testing of the LEP students and determine their levels of English. I'm also taking a second Master's and I have to leave three days a week almost immediately after school, so just sitting down to talk is a problem. I wish there was time during the day to do this, but I'm so busy with the kids, and I don't want to take time away from them.

I finally decided that I'd let her work on some reinforcement activities with some of the students. So I gave her my plans and told her to follow them religiously. But she never did it exactly the way I wanted it done—she apparently thought it didn't make much difference how she did it as long as she felt comfortable. So what was I to do? I walked over to the group and suggested she try it the way I had written it. I could see in the faces of the students that they agreed with me.

Three months have gone by and I'm still as harried as I was before, if not more so. And to make matters worse, she seems to be having trouble controlling the kids in the classroom. It started when I had to leave for an emergency meeting and Anne was left in charge. I'm not sure what she did wrong but she is having real trouble dealing with one of the kids and it seems to have an impact on the way some of the students are responding to her. I think my initial response to having another adult in the classroom was probably right. But sometimes I wonder, because the teacher across the hall seems very pleased to have a paraprofessional to assist her. Maybe I should find the time to talk to her about how she deals with the problems of integrating the paraprofessional into the program.

CONTACTS

1. *Anna Lou Pickett*

Anna Lou Pickett, Director of The National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Services Center for Advanced Study in Education at City University of New York, has for many years been a faithful advocate for paraprofessional development. A 1995 report, *Paraprofessionals in the Education Workforce*, was prepared by Anna Lou Pickett and is available on the National Education Association's web site at:

http://www.nea.org/esp/resource/parawork.htm

The National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals web site is:

http://web.gc.cuny.edu/dept/case/nrcp/

2. *Washington Education Association*

Since 1994-95 the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Special Education has funded the Paraeducator Project with the objective of developing competencies for special education pareducators working in educational settings. The need for this project is based on the federal requirements mandating qualifications and training for paraeducators and the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 392-172-200 (3) Staff Qualifications. An Advisory Group was established and has developed a recommended list of competencies with statewide input gathered from meetings with paraeducators, Educational Service District and local school district personnel, families, and other groups. Rose Miller, the Paraeducator Project Coordinator, may be reached at (253) 946-4697 or (800) 622-3393.

The WEA has a website which is extensive and excellent. It may be found at:

http://www.wa.nea.org/Prf_Dv/PARA_ED

3. *The Minnesota Paraprofessional Consortium* is at the cutting edge of states in the nation to address paraprofessional development. They have a wealth of information on their web site. Minnesota has established a set of guiding principles for its paraprofessionals. The Minnesota Paraprofessional Consortium, which has been in existence for ten years, consists of nearly forty individuals, including teachers and paraprofessionals from local school districts, and individuals from state agencies, unions, and institutions of higher education. These individuals have provided guidance to a variety of activities designed to support and enhance Minnesota's paraprofessional workforce. Their web site is:

http://ici2.coled.umn.edu/para/default.html

The guiding principles for Minnesota Paraprofessionals are:

- Paraprofessionals are respected and supported as integral team members responsible for assisting in the delivery of instruction and other student related activities.
- The entire instructional team participates within clearly-defined roles in a dynamic changing environment to provide an appropriate educational program for students.
- To ensure quality education and safety for students and staff, paraprofessionals are provided with a district orientation and training prior to assuming those responsibilities.
- Teachers and others responsible for the work of paraprofessionals have the skills necessary to work effectively with paraprofessionals.
- By recognizing paraprofessionals' training, responsibilities, experience, and skill level, they are placed in position for which they are qualified, which effectively and efficiently use their skills to enhance the continuity and quality of services for students.
- Administrators exercise leadership by recognizing paraprofessionals as educational partners.

There are many references on this web site to outside sources which school districts may utilize to enhance paraprofessional development.

4. *The University of Nebraska-Lincoln* has a wonderful web site and offers a free course on-line. While the project is no longer being funded, if a school registers with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln as an instructor site and identifies an instructor, then a server will be assigned so that they will have access to answers and paraeducator activities. The contact person would be Dr. Al Steckelberg. Included in the practicum activities are:

- Roles and Responsibilities of the Paraeducator
- Ethical Issues
- Classroom Organization and Management
- Instructional Skills
- Behavior Management
- Observation and Recording of Student Performance
- Communication Skills
- Special Education Programs

The web site may be found at:

http://para.unl.edu/

5. The U.S. Department of Education published a book in 1997 called, *Roles for Education Paraprofessionals in Effective Schools.* The report enumerates roles for education paraprofessionals in effective schools and then profiles 14 effective programs in the United States. The report states:

> *"When schools and districts provide paraprofessionals with appropriate training, instructional team support and supervision, the academic substance and effectiveness of their contributions to students improve."*

6. *Tool Kit for Tutors* was produced by Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) at the University of Michigan in 1998.

7. Karen Schmidt, Paraprofessional Development Specialist at Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), may be reached for information at (800) 547-6339, x552.

A special thanks to Rose Miller, Paraeducator Project Coordinator of the Washington Education Association, for participating in this workshop. Grateful acknowledgement to the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) on the use of tutoring objectives to become a good reader. Thank you also to Carole Hunt from NWREL for the vignette script and problem solving worksheet.

Master Teacher Talks

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

Master Teacher Talks

The "Master Teacher Talks" session at the Assuring Competency in Reading Advisory Conference was comprised of master teachers from around the country who had been recognized by their schools, districts, and states for exemplary service to the field. Each of the presentations shared classroom activities, application of research into the classroom, and ideas for changing instruction in the wake a standards-based implementation. Abstracts for each of the presentations will follow this introduction and the biographies.

Two presentations focused on the impact of changing instructional and curricular practices at the middle school level. Lynn Nystrom and Kristen Dalpiaz of the Marizana Unified School District in Tuscon, Arizona, presented practical middle school application of Howard Gardner's theory on multiple intelligences and learning styles. Anna Lee James and Karen Herinckx of Waldo Middle School in Salem, Oregon, demonstrated a "before" and "after" picture of their classrooms following the implementation of a trait-based reading system for the state of Oregon.

Two other presentations focused on the changing face of elementary reading instruction and assessment with the expectation of critical reading development at earlier ages. A team of teachers from Cutbank and Shelby, Montana, presented a reading trait-based play they use for instructional purposes in their intermediate classrooms, while Susan Marchese of Whidbey Island, Washington, shared her reading and writing classroom workshop for primary grades.

The presentations in this session described the rigor, intimacy, and clarity of a master teacher classroom. These master teachers share a willingness and ability to set clear reading goals for students based on state benchmarks, use a variety of assessment strategies to collect information about students' reading ability, and use that information to make focused decisions about instruction. In such a classroom, teachers create an environment where students are more able to set reading goals, understand the criteria for good reading, and more effectively communicate their questions and concerns.

Abstracts

Using the Multiple Intelligences to Meet Academic Needs and Achieve Student Success

Kristen Dalpiaz and Lynn Nystrom
Marana Unified School District, Arizona

In this presentation authors Kristen Dalpiaz and Lynn Nystrom discuss the concept of "multiple intelligences." The theory of multiple intelligences confirms the fact that there are various areas of intelligence, and children have different strengths and weaknesses among the intelligence types. The focus of the material is on how this concept of multiple intelligences helps to identify and meet the academic needs of children. This observance of multiple intelligences will enable all students to recognize their strengths and empower teachers to promote the development of all intelligence types.

Highlights of the text include a student interest survey, which helps students to discover different aspects of themselves by articulating their interests, strengths, and preferred way of learning. This information is beneficial to both students and teachers beginning to learn about the concept of multiple intelligences.

Another highlight is a self-analysis, which helps to answer the question, "what am I good at?" Next, the authors discuss the importance of what they refer to as a "reflection log." This log allows students to internalize what they learn and process it into words. Keeping a journal filled with notes, responses to activities, and reflections are ways of assessing students and allowing them to see the personalization of the multiple intelligences.

The booklet also includes a list of ten things that teachers can do right now to help teach parents and students about multiple intelligences. An example from the list asserts that teachers can provide homework assignments that require students to work in the various intelligences areas. Another is that teachers may even give unit tests or quizzes that are multi-perceptual.

Kristen Dalpiaz attended Northern Arizona University, earning a bachelor's degree in elementary education with a journalism minor. Her master's degree in educational leadership is also from Northern Arizona University. For the past ten years, Kristen has taught in the school district where she grew up. **Lynn Nystrom** teaches seventh grade in the Marana Unified School District in Arizona.

If We Did It, You Can Do It Too! Changing Instruction To Meet Demands

Karen Herinckx and Anna Lee James
Waldo Middle School, Salem, Oregon

In this presentation authors Karen Herinckx and Anna Lee James introduce a variety of reading instruction tools and activities. The focus of the text is on a performance-based assessment and scoring guide for student reading. The guide focuses on scoring comprehension, extended understanding, and reading critically/text analysis.

Highlights of the text include a section entitled "Effective Book Talks". This activity consists of students reading a novel (the same or a variety) coming together in a group to discuss their thoughts, reactions, and analyses of what they're reading. This activity is followed by curriculum notes, which include performance tasks based on the reading scoring guide. These performance tasks are qualitatively measurable aspects of reading, focusing on the areas of comprehension, extending understanding, and reading critically.

Karen Herinckx has taught for eleven years and feels fortunate to have spent three years teaching at two very different high schools. She is currently in her eighth year at Waldo Middle School in Salem, Oregon. Her master's degree in secondary English was truly focused on literacy in an attempt to find some of the missing pieces in current instructional practices. **Anna Lee James** has taught for twenty-five years. Presently a Title 1 reading specialist at Waldo Middle School in Salem, Oregon, she holds a B.S. degree from Whitworth College in Spokane Washington and did graduate work at Oregon State and Western Oregon University. Her teaching experience covers first grade through high school.

R.E.A.D. in Montana

Callie Epstein, Shelly Wanty, Peggy Taylor, and Jetta Johnson
Cut Bank School District, Shelby and Cut Bank, Montana

This presentation offers assessments written by participants in the R.E.A.D. Workshop in Montana. These assessments were the assignment given to the teachers during the workshop. After presenting each trait of an effective reader in the text, the authors felt that the best evaluation and the most usable product would be an assessment of books that teachers use in the classroom.

Examples of books assessed include *Sioux City Sue* by Bruce and Charlotte Whitehead, *Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel, *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon, *Sacajawea* by Della Rowland, and *Class Clown* by Johanna Hursvitz.

Highlights of the text are in the teacher assessments of the books used in their classes. In the assessments the purpose and utility of the traits are clearly presented. For example, in an assessment of Charlotte's Web a teacher comments in reference to the realizing context trait, 'describe in your own words the atmosphere at the fair.' The same teacher later asks in reference to the critiquing for evaluation trait to 'defend the statement that Wilbur said, "there will never be another Charlotte." In these assessments the teachers utilize the traits to help probe the essence and deeper meanings of their books. The result is that the traits provide a tool for teachers to better understand how to assess reading and what reading traits are important to teach.

Callie Epstein, Jetta Johnson, Peggy Taylor, and Shelly Wanty all work in K-5 elementary education where they value their students and community and consider reading key to appreciating life in Montana and educating its youngest citizens.

Developing Reading through Writing

Susan Marchese
Coupeville Elementary School, Washington

In this presentation author Susan Marchese offers writing exercises that develop reading skills. The text first includes a table of essential academic learning requirements. The essential requirements are: the student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read, the student understands the meaning of what is read, the student reads different materials for a variety of purposes, and the student sets goals and evaluates progress to improve reading. These are the skills that the author's exercises are intended to hone and improve for students.

Highlights of the text include a section entitled "Using the Traits to Elicit Written or Oral Responses." This section is comprised of suggested questions that address various reading skill areas such as textual conventions, interpretation, and synthesis. Other highlights include sections entitled "Evoking Images in the Reader's Workshop: Some Key Ideas" and "A Guide to using Imagery as an "Extended Response"." These sections provide information on the characteristics of proficient readers and the use of imagery in reading comprehension, respectively.

The author also includes a section entitled "Imagery: A Lesson Plan for Reading" which is designed to enhance reading comprehension. Finally, Marchese offers an activity entitled "Literary Circles" and a dialogue journal. The author also provides discussion questions for the literary circles activity. The text concludes with a dialogue journal. In this type of assessment, students, groups, and teachers respond in writing to one another through the form of a dialogue.

Susan Marchese has a master's degree from Western Washington in Elementary Education. She has been a professional educator for twelve years, the last nine in Coupeville, WA, where she teaches in a 1/2/3 multiage classroom. Becoming and remaining a primary multiage teacher is driven by Marchese's commitment to "excellence in education."

Using the Multiple Intelligences to Meet Academic Needs and Achieve Student Success

Kristen Dalpiaz and Lynn Nystrom
Marana Unified School District, Arizona

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

KIDS WHO ARE DIFFERENT

By Digby Wolfe

Here's to the kids who are different,
The kids who don't always get As,
The kids who have ears twice the size of their peers,
And noses that go on for days. . .
Here's to the kids who are different,
The kids they call crazy or dumb. . .
The kids who don't fit, with the guts and the grit,
Who dance to a different drum. . .
Here's to the kids who are different,
The kids with the mischievous streak,
For when they have grown, as a history's shown,
It's their difference that makes them unique.

"PROVIDING EQUITABLE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS USING THEIR INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS IN THE AREAS OF INTELLIGENCE. USING READING THEMATICALLY TO NURTURE STUDENT'S INTELLIGENCE AND SET THEM ON A PATH TO SUCCESS"

Kristen Rex Dalpiaz
Marana Unified School District
Tucson, Arizona

Students can discover aspects of themselves by articulating their interests, strengths, and preferred ways of learning. This information is beneficial to students and teachers. The following survey asks students to reflect on their desires, anxieties, and preferred forms of praise. This survey can be used as an ice-breaker in the unit, data gathering, a personal link between teacher and student.

STUDENT INTEREST SURVEY

Student Name________________________________

1. Three words that describe me are______________
2. Things I like to do when I'm not at school are______
3. The subject I do best at in school is______________
4. I would like to learn more about________________
5. Someday I would like to________________________
6. Learning is fun when__________________________
7. If I could do anything I wanted at school, it would be_____
8. I like to get praise for________________________
9. At school, when I've done something well, I like to be acknowledged by_____
10. I wonder a lot about__________________________
11. I like people who____________________________
12. Sometimes I worry about_______________________
13. I learn best when____________________________
14. One thing that really bothers me is______________
15. Something that really challenges me is___________
16. One thing I know about myself is________________

Name_______________ Period_________

Self-Analysis

What do I like and what am I good at? Using the chart below, score your feelings to answer the following questions. Tally your answers to find your strengths.

+++= "Super!" ---= "Ugh!"
++= "Okay" --= "Fair"
+= "So, so" ---= "So, so"

Verbal/Linguistic
reading_________
writing_________
speaking________

Logical/Mathematical
working with numbers___________
solving problems_________________
thinking logically_________________

Visual/Spatial
pretending and using the imagination__________
drawing/painting/working with clay___________
finding my way around places________________

Bodily/Kinesthetic
playing roles_______________
playing physical games_____
exercising my body________

Musical/Rhythmic
singing or playing music__________
sounding rhythm or beat_________
recognizing different sounds______

Interpersonal
listening to others_______________________
encouraging and supporting others_______
being part of a team____________________

Intrapersonal
talking positively to myself__________
being aware of my feelings__________
liking to do some things alone________

Reflection Log

Allowing students time to process what they learn and then turn it into words on paper is important. As you teach your students about the Multiple Intelligences break them into set lessons for each area. After learning the intelligence, develop activities to enhance them. After activities it is vital to allow the student time to process the information and respond.

EXAMPLES:

"An insight/thought I've had today is. . ."
(Write it)

"An image/picture I have of this day is. . ."
(Draw it)

"If today were a song it would be called. . ."
(Sing it)

"An interesting pattern I'm noticing about these activities is. . ."
(Think about it)

"A body movement/gesture for today's activity might be. . ."
(Do it)

"I want to talk with someone about_______"
(Discuss it)

"My inner feelings about today are. . ."
(Meditate about it)

**Keeping a journal filled with notes, responses to activities, reflections is a way of assessing students and allowing them to see the personalization of the Multiple Intelligences.

Ten Things You Can Do Right Now

(without asking anyone's permission and without endangering your job!)

1. Teach students about multiple intelligences. Design a series is mini-lessons or activities whose purpose is to help students get to know themselves from the "brainside out". Regularly expose them to the concepts of "seven ways of knowing." (see Seven Pathways of learning: Teaching Students and Parents about Multiple Intelligences [Lazear 1991] for lesson ideas.

2. Vary your instruction by teaching with the Multiple Intelligences. Try to vary your lessons that give students the opportunity to use all seven intelligences.

3. Provide homework assignments that require students to work in the various intelligences areas. Create fun, unusual, and interesting homework assignments that will stretch students to use all seven intelligences. Steer away from drill assignments and move into the realms of higher level thinking and creativity.

4. Give unit tests or quizzes that are multi perceptual. Design exciting, challenging activities through which students can prove their knowledge.

5. Have in-services with parents about the Multiple Intelligences. Create awareness workshop for parents that will help them understand the theory and how you'll be using it in your classroom. At conferences use journal work, child's self analysis to show parents you are working to reach and teach their child more effectively.

6. Start students building and keeping portfolios, and journals/logs. Help students create a holistic picture of their learning journey. Let them decide what should go in the portfolio as long as it gives an accurate picture of what they have done. Consider student-led conferences.

7. Integrate teaching of MI into your curriculum. Give opportunities for students to hone their strengths or examine their areas of improvement. (See Seven Ways of Knowing: Teaching for Multiple Intelligences [Lazear 1991] for exercises, practices, and model lesson.

8. Invite students' input on designing examinations. Prior to a formal exam, ask students to tell you what would help them show you what they know about the concept. Your goal is to maximize the possibility of all students succeeding on the exam.

9. Experiment with projects, displays, exhibits, and performances. As a culminating activity for a unit, have students create a major presentation that integrates the knowledge base of the unit and displays one or more of the seven intelligences.

10. Share stuff that works! Discuss the positive and negatives of lessons and units. Invite feedback. I don't expect to to change you teaching style, rather incorporate the Multiple Intelligences in students language arts one step at a time. Having someone to share with is a good way to learn, develop, and save yourself time and effort. Two heads are better than one.

Lesson Plan Ideas for Reading

Verbal/Linguistic

--Play "What Would I do?" with characters from the current reading selection.

--Write a sequel/next episode to a story or play.

--Create crossword puzzles/word jumbles for vocabulary words.

--Play "New Word for the Day" game. Learn a new word/use it during the day. Log incident in journal.

--Practice impromptu speaking and writing in small and large groups.

Mathematical/Logical

--Prediction of what will happen next in a story or play.

--Analyze similarities and differences of various pieces of literature.

--Use Venn diagram to analyze characters in a play.

--Use a "story grid" for creative writing activities.

--Predict what will happen in current event stories clipped from newspapers.

Visual/Spatial

--Play vocabulary words "Pictionary".

--Teach "mind-mapping" as a notetaking process.

--Draw different stages of a story your reading like a comic strip.

--Use highlighters to "colorize" parts of a story or peom. Theme, plot, character development, setting, climax.

Body/Kinesthetic

--Play "The Parts of the Story" charades.

--Kinesthetic Vocabulary Bee

Musical/Rhythmic

--Create songs/rap to teach grammar, syntax, elements of a story.

--Listen to music from cultures that match story you are studying.

Interpersonal

--Experiment with joint story writing to create a new ending. One starts the story and then pass it on.

--Analyze a story and describe its message, reach concensus.

--Hold a court room style trial. EXAMPLE:The Trial of the Big Bad Wolf.

--Role-play a conversation with an important historical figure.

--Practice stop the action and improvise in stories.

The Outsiders

by S.E. Hinton

Thematic instruction using the Mulitple Intelligences lends itself nicely to this novel.

There are many vocabulary words that students must understand to help develop meaning in the story. Here are a few ways of providing an interesting way to develop vocabulary.

1. Students create a wordsearch/crossword puzzle complete with answer key.

2. Vocabulary Bee. Similar to a spelling bee, but in addition to spelling each word correctly, the game participants must correctly define the words as well.

3. Vocabulary Concentration: The goal of the game is to match vocabulary words with their definitions.

Literary Terms should be defined, discussed and used in journal writing. Individual and partners may work together to develop a strong sense of the story. Plot, Setting, Characterization, Theme, and Point of View.

1. Journal entries, daily entries can help the student develop a literary sense as the story progresses. Share journal discussion in small groups.

2. Character Development: "What Would I Do?" Students become characters in the story. They are then asked questions and must respond to the questions how they feel character would respond.

3. Create the ideal community by identifying problems and finding solutions to urban problems. Brainstorm problems in urban areas. Create a web of problems, develop strategies to solve the problem. Give example cities that are in need of strategies to develop the ideal community.
    Using the quote from James Reston, columnist for the

4. Identifying elements that make fiction realistic

**Evaluating fiction

Although S.E. Hinton wrote The Outsiders over thirty years ago, it's still popular today with teenagers. Obviously, gangs in the 1960s in Oklahoma are different from gangs in urban areas today. Yet there must be some truth or realism i the book for today's readers to make connections with the sotry.

Think back to the characters, plot, and setting of The Outsiders. Try to identify features of the elements. Pick out realistic elements of the story and list in journal.

If We Did It, You Can Do It Too! Changing Instruction to Meet Demands

Karen Herinckx and Anna Lee James
Waldo Middle School, Salem, Oregon

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Effective Book Talks

Students reading a novel (the same or a variety) come together in a group of approximately four to discuss their thoughts, reactions, analysis of what they're reading. They are encouraged to jot notes on post its which mark spots where they have a question or strong response. You know the small group discussions are working when you observe the groups engaging in some of the following:

1. Go back to the text and locate the exact section or examples. Explore. ("I can see what you're saying, but what about . . .")
2. Keep interpretations open for discussion.
3. Find the big conversations in the little details.
4. Participants change their minds sometimes.
5. The conversation veers from one text to another (talk about whatever the issue is as it pertains to this book, any books read, all of life).
6. Listen actively. When someone is talking, be thinking, "Do I understand/ agree/ have an additional idea?"
7. Each group member brings at least one possible discussion idea to the table. The group decides the topic of conversation for the day. Each member might lay out one post it and the group will look for common issues or threads. Then clear all but the one post it that will begin the focus of the discussion.
8. Keep a record of group activities: what's discussed, effective methods, equalized participation, mind changes, listening strategies, etc.

Ideas taken from Lucy Calkins workshop as put into practice by Karen Herinckx, Salem-Keizer School District

Oregon Middle Level Association
707 13th Street SE, Suite 100
Salem, Oregon 97301-4035

Curriculum Notes: Reading

Designing Performance Tasks based on the Reading/Literature Scoring Guide

COMPREHENSION

Understanding on three levels

- Literal (understanding main ideas, significant supporting details)
- Inferential (draws inferences and forms supported conclusions)
- Evaluative (presents interpretations/generalizations based on textual evidence)
- Uses information from textual resources (graphs, charts, diagrams, table of contents), if present

EXTENDING UNDERSTANDING

Relates elements of the selection (events, characters, themes or messages) to:

- Relevant personal experiences or
- Other texts (read, heard or viewed) or
- Issues/events in the community/world at large

READING CRITICALLY: TEXT ANALYSIS

Analysis/evaluation of author's ideas and craft

- Stylistic decisions (e.g.: structure, point of view, word choice) and how they show author's purpose
- Effectiveness of literary elements (e.g., characters, plot, setting) and literary devices (e.g., figurative language, symbols, dialect)
- Gives reasoned opinions, judgments about the author's craft or messages

COMPREHENSION

Students will show that they "get" the story by:

- Understanding the main idea
- Making predictions and inferences
- Generalizing and interpreting text
- Using textual resources such as graphs, charts, table of contents,

Sample Questions for Performance Tasks:

- Discuss the themes and main ideas of the selection.
- Draw a cartoon which shows the main ideas or plot of the story.
- All selections relate ideas and themes that are different to different people. What themes or ideas might a reader gain from this piece that may not be obvious to all?
- Identify what you feel to be the author's purpose. What specific events or ideas helped you discover this purpose?
- What is the importance of the ________ in the selection?
- Trace the main events. Could you change their order or leave any of them out? Why or why not?
- Map different elements of the story (plot, setting, characters, timeline).
- What does the poem, etc. say to you?
- Did the story end the way you expected it to? What clues did the author offer to prepare you to expect this ending?

Practice showing comprehension through a variety of methods:

- Graphic organizers: Open minds, Venn diagrams, book jackets (picture, summary)
- Reading logs or journals
- Group Activities: Book talks, plays, skits
- Stop at strategic points when reading a story aloud. Have students make predictions about what might happen next. Ask them to support their predictions by citing what events in the text seem to point in that direction.

EXTENDING UNDERSTANDING

Students will show that can "connect" the reading to other ideas by:

- Relating elements (events, characters, themes/messages) of the text to
    - Relevant personal experiences or
    - Other texts (read, heard, viewed) or
    - Issues/events in the community, world, history and/or culture

Sample Questions for Performance Tasks:

- How is this text similar to other selections in terms of theme/main idea/purpose/detail
- Discuss other stories, texts, movies, that you thought of in reading this piece. Be specific in explaining the relationship.
- What from your personal experience can you relate this selection to? This could be a book, a movie, an incident from your own life or something you've heard or read about.
- Identify aspects of the story that tell you what time period it takes place in. Discuss any evidence you can find that this time period had different attitudes or social customs than your own.
- Think about the characters in the story. How are any of them the same type of character that you have met in other stories?

Practice extending understanding through a variety of methods:

- After reading a story, discuss what other stories are similar. Similarities may be related to themes, characters, events or messages. Also discuss some specific differences.
- Discuss experiences students may have had which are like those described in the selection (i.e., a time when they experienced similar emotions).
- Discuss what movies, videos, songs, etc. have similar messages, characters, events or themes, Compare and contrast.

- Discuss how the theme or message is similar to what is happening in the community, state, nation, or world.
- Use graphic organizers (Venn diagrams, T-Charts) to illustrate comparisons and contrasts
- Practice making extensions in reading journals or in margin notes.

READING CRITICALLY: TEXT ANALYSIS

Students will show that they can be a "literary critic" by:

- Identifying the author's purpose
- Analyzing the author's use of literary elements/devices
- Analyzing the author's choice of ideas
- Analyzing the implied messages
- Making supported judgments

Sample Questions for Performance Tasks:

- How does the author move the main idea or theme along? Cite specific examples from the text.
- The author is coming to our school soon. What suggestions would you make to him/her to improve the story?
- How effectively did the author of the selection use word choice and writing style to increase the impact of the selection? Were they any specific passages that particularly appealed to you or that you found weak?
- Choose two descriptive passages from the selection. Copy the passage and tell why you selected them.
- How does the author create a "mood?" How does the mode contribute to the story's impact?
- If the author changed the setting, time, characters how would it affect the story? What was the author's purpose in writing this story? How do you know?
- Who is the narrator of the story? How would the story change if the author had someone else in the book or an outside narrator tell the story?

Practice text analysis through a variety of methods:

- Discuss the students' opinions of the book or selection. Stress the importance of students supporting their opinions with evidence from the text (Comments like "I thought it was boring" should be followed up with "Why? What made it boring to you?"
- Discuss how the author's use of literary elements (e.g., plot, setting character, theme, mood, point of view) contribute to the effectiveness of the selection.
- Discuss the author's use of literary devices (e.g., symbols, metaphors, similes, personification) in the selection. Cite examples from the selection and discuss their effectiveness.
- Discuss why the author might have written this selection (author's purpose). How does the author's stylistic decisions (e.g., structure, word choice, point of view) support this purpose?
- Practice text analysis responses in reading journals or through margin notes.
- Have students write letters to the author citing strengths and/or weaknesses of the selection.

Vocabulary to teach for Reading Critically

Author's Purpose
- Persuade
- Inform
- Entertain

Literary Elements:
- Character
  Protagonist, Antagonist
- Plot
- Setting
- Theme
- Mood
- Point of View
- First person
- Third person
- Conflict / Resolution

Literary Devices:
- Figurative language
  - ⇒ Metaphor
  - ⇒ Simile
  - ⇒ Personification
  - ⇒ Hyperbole
- Imagery
- Sound devices
  - ⇒ Alliteration
  - ⇒ Rhyme patterns
  - ⇒ Onomatopoeia
- Symbolism
- Foreshadowing
- Dialect
- Irony

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Assessment Options
Using the Reading/Literature Scoring Guide

Here are some options that can be adapted for use in generating work samples to assess students' reading. Remember, all required dimensions must be addressed in each assessment.

- **On-demand Reading Assessment:** A written assessment, usually using a split-page format. May combine open-ended responses and graphic organizers.

- **Reading Journals**: Students use journals when reading a selection or a novel. Students respond to focus questions given by the teacher. Journals may be used over time to collect evidence for different dimensions as a novel is being read by the students.

- **Book Talks/Oral Reports**: Students read a book, poem, story or other reading materials and give an oral presentation covering all dimensions of the scoring guide.

- **Response logs**: Similar to journals, only there is no focus question given by the teacher. Students use knowledge of the scoring guide to frame responses.

- **Written Response**: Students provide a written response to a selection or book. This might be an essay or completion of a book review form.

- **Novel/Selection Test**: Open-ended questions based on a novel that the students have read, usually completed in an on-demand setting. May include multiple choice items.

- **Projects:** Students complete a project over time related to materials they are reading. The project criteria would need to be set up to cover all dimensions of the scoring guide.

This issue of Curriculum Notes was created with the help of Mary Beth Munroe, a language arts/social studies teacher at Talent Middle School. The information presented is based on material distributed by the Oregon Dept. of Education. Our thanks to all involved.

READING
Informative and Literary Texts Scoring Guide

1998-99 Field Test Version

Comprehension

6

The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the parts of the selection and the selection as a whole.

The response:

- indicates a thorough and accurate understanding of main ideas and all significant supporting details, including clarification of complexities.
- draws subtle as well as obvious inferences and forms insightful conclusions about their meaning.
- presents interpretations, generalizations or predictions based on specific and compelling evidence.
- uses relevant and specific information from textual resources (e.g., table of contents, graphs, charts, diagrams, glossary) to form interpretations and deepen understanding.

5

The response demonstrates a strong understanding of the parts of the selection and the selection as a whole.

The response:

- indicates a thorough and accurate understanding of main ideas and significant supporting details.
- draws key inferences and forms strongly supported conclusions about their meaning.
- presents interpretations, generalizations or predictions based on specific, conclusive evidence.
- uses information from textual resources (e.g., table of contents, graphs, charts, diagrams, glossary) to form interpretations and deepen understanding.

4

The response demonstrates a competent understanding of the parts of the selection and the selection as a whole.

The response:

- indicates an understanding of the main ideas and relevant and specific supporting details.
- draws obvious inferences and forms supported conclusions about their meaning.
- presents interpretations, generalizations or predictions based on adequate evidence.
- uses information from textual resources (e.g., table of contents, graphs, charts, diagrams, glossary) to clarify meaning and form conclusions.

3

The response demonstrates a limited, inconsistent or incomplete understanding of the parts of the selection and the selection as a whole.

The response:

- correctly identifies some main ideas; focuses on isolated details or misunderstands or omits some significant supporting details.
- suggests inferences but provides incomplete support for conclusions based on them.
- suggests interpretations, generalizations or predictions but provides incomplete support for them.
- uses obvious information from textual resources (e.g., table of contents, graphs, charts, diagrams, glossary) to gain meaning but may overlook some important details.

2

The response demonstrates a confused or inaccurate understanding of the parts of the selection and the selection as a whole.

The response:

- shows a confused, inaccurate or fragmented understanding of the selection; presents random, incomplete or irrelevant evidence.
- does not draw inferences or suggests inferences not supported by the text.
- does not provide supported interpretations, generalizations, or predictions or provides ones that are unsupported by the text; may contain passages copied verbatim without analysis or commentary.
- does not refer to textual resources (e.g., table of contents, graphs, charts, diagrams, glossary) or reveals that the reader is distracted or confused by them.

1

The response demonstrates virtually no understanding of the parts of the selection and the selection as a whole.

The response:

- does not show an ability to construct a literal meaning of the selection; may focus only on reader's own frustration or indicate that the reader gave up.

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Extending Understanding*

6 **The response demonstrates a thorough and complex understanding of the selection and its relationship to other texts (read, heard or viewed), experiences, issues or events in the community or world at large.** ***The response:*** • relates the selection to substantive and relevant personal experiences, making insightful and supported connections to elements of the text (e.g., events, characters, themes or messages). • relates elements of the selection (e.g., events, characters, themes or messages) to other texts in complex and subtle ways through insightful generalizations or conclusions. • makes insightful and supported connections between themes or messages of a selection and its relationship to issues or events in the community or world at large.	**5** **The response demonstrates a strong understanding of the selection and its relationship to other texts (read, heard or viewed), experiences, issues or events in the community or world at large.** ***The response:*** • relates the selection to relevant personal experiences, making detailed connections to elements of the text (e.g., events, characters, themes or messages). • relates elements of the selection (e.g., events, characters, themes or messages) to other texts in complex and subtle ways through supported generalizations or conclusions. • makes in-depth connections between themes or messages of a selection and issues or events in the community or world at large.
4 **The response demonstrates a competent understanding of the selection and its relationship to other texts (read, heard or viewed), experiences, issues or events in the community or world at large.** ***The response:*** • relates the selection to relevant personal experiences, making supported connections to elements of the text (e.g., events, characters, themes or messages). • relates elements of the selection (e.g., events, characters, themes or messages) to other texts by drawing conclusions or forming generalizations although they may be primarily literal. • makes supported connections between themes or messages of a selection and issues or events in the community or world at large.	**3** **The response demonstrates a limited or inconsistent understanding of the selection and its relationship to other texts (read, heard or viewed), experiences, issues or events in the community or world at large.** ***The response:*** • relates the selection to relevant personal experiences, but connections may lack clarity or support. • relates the selection to other texts by drawing conclusions or forming generalizations which may be simplistic or incomplete • makes overly broad, general or unsupported connections between the selection and issues or events in the community or world at large.
2 **The response demonstrates a superficial or flawed understanding of the selection and its relationship to other texts (read, heard or viewed), relevant personal experiences or related topics or events.** ***The response:*** • relates the selection only superficially or indirectly to personal experiences. • makes weak or invalid connections between the selection and other texts. • makes weak, superficial or inaccurate connections between the selection and issues or events in the community or world at large.	**1** **The response does not show an understanding of the selection and its relationship to other texts (read, heard or viewed), relevant personal experiences or related topics or events.** ***The response:*** • does not show the ability to draw connections and see relationships between the selection and other texts, experiences, issues and events.

*Depending on the prompt or prompts provided on a reading assessment, a student may meet the standard through a response that addresses only one or two of the three descriptors (bullets) in this particular dimension.

Reading Critically: Text Analysis

6

The response demonstrates a thorough and convincing analysis and evaluation of an author's ideas and craft.

The response:

- identifies the author's purpose and presents a thorough and insightful analysis and evaluation of how the author's stylistic decisions (e.g., structure, point of view, word choice) affect the message and purpose.
- when based on a literary text, identifies and skillfully analyzes how literary elements (e.g., character, plot, setting, theme) and/or devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, symbol) contribute to the unity and effectiveness of the text.
- uses specific and relevant evidence from the text to make reasoned judgments about the author's craft or message(s).

5

The response demonstrates a strong analysis and evaluation of an author's ideas and craft.

The response:

- identifies the author's purpose and presents an analysis and evaluation of how some of the author's stylistic decisions (e.g., structure, point of view, word choice) affect the message and purpose.
- when based on a literary text, identifies and analyzes how selected literary elements (e.g., character, plot, setting, theme) and/or devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, symbol) contribute to the effectiveness of the text.
- uses specific and relevant evidence from the text to make reasoned judgments about the author's craft or message(s).

4

The response demonstrates a competent analysis and evaluation of an author's ideas and craft.

The response:

- identifies the author's purpose and analyzes how the author's stylistic decisions (e.g., structure, point of view, word choice) contribute to the purpose.
- when based on a literary text, provides a basic analysis of how literary elements (e.g., character, plot, setting, theme) and/or literary devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, symbol) contribute to the effectiveness of the selection, using terminology as appropriate.
- uses relevant evidence from the text to make and support reasoned judgments about the author's craft or message(s).

3

The response demonstrates an incomplete analysis of an author's ideas and craft; evaluations are simplistic or unsupported.

The response:

- shows limited identification and analysis of the author's purpose and begins to analyze how stylistic decisions (e.g., structure, point of view, word choice) contribute to the message(s).
- when based on a literary text, gives unsupported or simplistic explanations of how literary elements or devices contribute to the effectiveness of the selection.
- uses limited evidence from the text to form opinions about the author's craft or message(s).

2

The response demonstrates a superficial, confused, or unfounded analysis of the author's ideas and craft.

The response:

- indicates a lack of awareness of the author's purpose or stylistic decisions; there may even be an apparent lack of awareness of the author's voice (i.e., the reader may seem to have difficulty distinguishing author from narrator or character in the selection).
- when based on a literary text, does not use literary concepts or terms (e.g., character, plot, symbol, metaphor) to analyze the effectiveness of the selection.
- makes a judgment about the author's craft or message(s), but provides no textual support.

1

The response demonstrates no evidence of critical reading skills; the reader does not engage in a thoughtful analysis of the text.

The response:

- reflects an unquestioned acceptance or rejection of the author's craft or text's message(s) without comment or explanation.

Reading Critically: Context Analysis*

6

The response demonstrates a thorough and convincing analysis and evaluation of the ways in which an author's message(s) or theme(s) may have been influenced by history, society, culture and life experiences.

The response:

- applies a comprehensive understanding of an author's life experiences to analyze and evaluate how they may have shaped and influenced the author's work.
- uses extensive knowledge and understanding about historical, social, economic, political or cultural issues and events to analyze and evaluate how they may have shaped and influenced the author's work.

5

The response demonstrates a strong analysis and evaluation of the ways in which an author's message(s) or theme(s) may have been influenced by history, society, culture and life experiences.

The response:

- applies an understanding of an author's life experiences to analyze and evaluate how they may have shaped and influenced the author's work.
- uses knowledge and understanding about historical, social, economic, political or cultural issues and events to analyze and evaluate how they may have shaped and influenced the author's work.

4

The response demonstrates a competent analysis and evaluation of the ways in which an author's message(s) or theme(s) may have been influenced by history, society, culture and life experiences.

The response:

- applies an understanding of an author's life experiences to examine and explain ways they may have shaped and influenced the author's work.
- uses a basic knowledge and understanding about historical, social, economic, political or cultural issues and events to analyze how they may have shaped and influenced the author's work.

3

The response demonstrates an incomplete analysis of the ways in which an author's message(s) or theme(s) may have been influenced by history, society, culture and life experiences.

The response:

- applies a limited or incomplete understanding of an author's life experiences to examine and explain ways they may have influenced the author's work.
- shows a limited or incomplete knowledge about historical, social, economic, political or cultural issues and events and how they may have shaped and influenced the author's work.

2

The response demonstrates a confused or unfounded analysis of the ways in which an author's message(s) or theme(s) may have been influenced by history, society, culture and life experiences.

The response:

- attempts in superficial or illogical ways to explain how an author's life experiences may have influenced the author's work.
- gives an inaccurate or confused explanation of how historical, social, economic, political or cultural issues and events may have shaped and influenced the author's work.

1

The response demonstrates no evidence of critical reading skills; the reader does not engage in a thoughtful analysis of the text.

The response:

- does not show the ability to explain how external factors may have influenced the author's work.

* The fourth dimension, **Reading Critically: Context Analysis**, is included in the content standards only at the Certificate of Advanced Mastery level (Grade 12). Therefore, pending State Board action, students do not have to meet a standard in this dimension to receive a CIM. However, practice should be provided in this trait at the other benchmarks to prepare students for potential assessments at grades 11 and 12.

SECTION I Select at least four different items from this section Wherever possible cite examples from your reading to back up your ideas

1. Give reasons for a character's behavior

2. Examine the positive and/or negative values of one of the characters

3. Give your interpretation of one of the themes in the work What techniques does the author use to develop the theme?

4. Evaluate the work as a whole Discuss elements such as characterization, plot, setting, theme, etc Who would enjoy this book and why?

5. From what you know about the work, speculate and make predictions about its outcome Explain your predictions

6. Report on what has happened in the selection thus far

7. What do you think were the causes that make a character behave as he/she does?

8. Describe a setting that is important to the story and tell why If you wish, you may draw the scene instead of describing it, but also attach a clarifying caption

9. Draw a character from the book and write a brief description

10. Write an original scene of dialogue for two or more characters from the novel

11. Get an open mind from the lit log file Pick one character from the novel Using drawings, words, phrases and/or symbols, show what that character was thinking and feeling in the story

12. Get a plot sheet from the lit log file Recreate the plot of the story on the diagram

13. Get the book jacket directions from the lit log file Create an original book jacket for your selection

14. Draw three illustrations depicting different important moments in the book Include captions explaining your illustrations

15. Create a timeline of twelve or more important events in the story

16.

17.

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SECTION II Select at least two different items from this section. Wherever possible cite examples from your reading to back up your ideas.

1. Evaluate what seems to you the most important word, sentence or paragraph in your reading and give reasons for your choices.

2. Describe a difficult situation that a character is in. How would you behave in such a situation and why?

3. Comment on the relevance of an important passage in your reading to today's world.

4. Reflect upon the learning or insights gained from reading this work.

5. Get an emotions sheet from the lit log file. List two emotions or feelings you experienced while reading. Cite words or ideas that made you feel this way and tell why.

6. Get a Venn diagram from the lit log file. How do one character's actions parallel those in your own life? How are they different? Show these ideas on the Venn diagram.

7. Does the main character in this selection remind you of characters from any other works of literature? Compare and contrast.

8. Compare this work with another by the same author.

9. What does the author want you to learn from his/her work? Do you agree or disagree with the author? Why?

10. Rewrite the ending.

11. List questions about puzzling passages.

12.

13.

SECTION III Select at least three different items from this section. Wherever possible cite examples from your reading to back up your ideas.

1. From what point of view is the story told? Why does the author use this point of view?

2. How does the author use language and actions to develop the mood of the story?

3. What genre is this piece? Is the author effective in this type of writing? Why or why not?

4. List examples of various figures of speech used in this selection.

5. What symbols does the author use in the work? What do these symbols represent?

6. Find an excerpt of dialogue in the selection. Paraphrase this excerpt. Discuss how the author uses dialogue to develop characters, plot, setting and/or theme.

7. Imitate the style of the passage creating a new passage for one of the chapters.

8. Critique the author's style.

9. Create a poster that symbolizes one of the important themes of the selection. your

10. Write a letter to the author telling him/her the main strengths/weaknesses of the piece.

11. How does the author create suspense to make you want to read on?

12. What clues does the author give that help prepare the reader for the final outcomes?

13.

14.

SECTION IV: Select at least two different items from this section. Wherever possible cite examples from your reading to back up your work.

1. Read the biographical information on the author. In what ways does the author's life relate to his/her writing?

2. Argue about the ideas presented in the work. How do the issues raised relate to your community, country and the world?

3. Defend two different points of view presented in the selection.

4. If this story were told in another time and place, would it be different? Pick a totally new time and place for this plot and tell how the characters, settings, events and dialogue might change.

5. Could this book have been written 100 years ago or 100 years from now? Why?

6. Discuss issues in the story that parallel events in today's world.

7.

8.

OPEN MIND

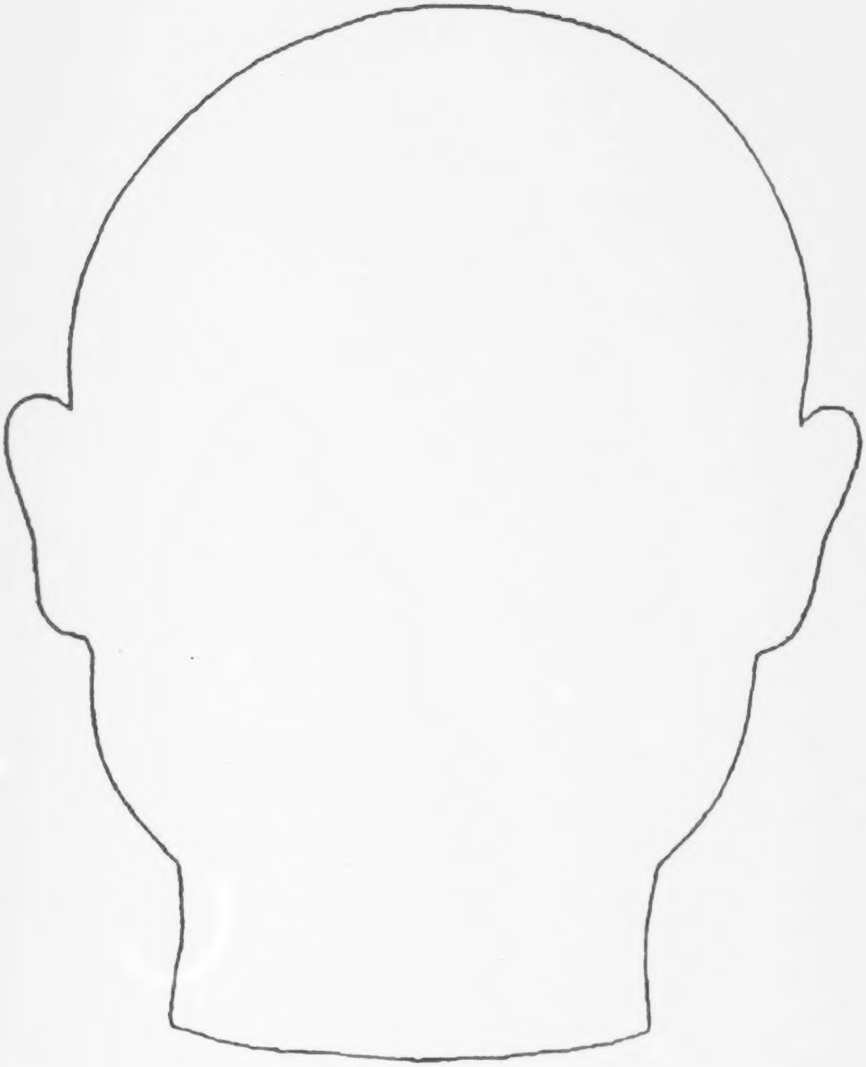
Name ______________________________

Date ______________________________

Title of book ______________________

Page in book ______ Lit Log # _____

Write the prompt:



VENN DIAGRAM

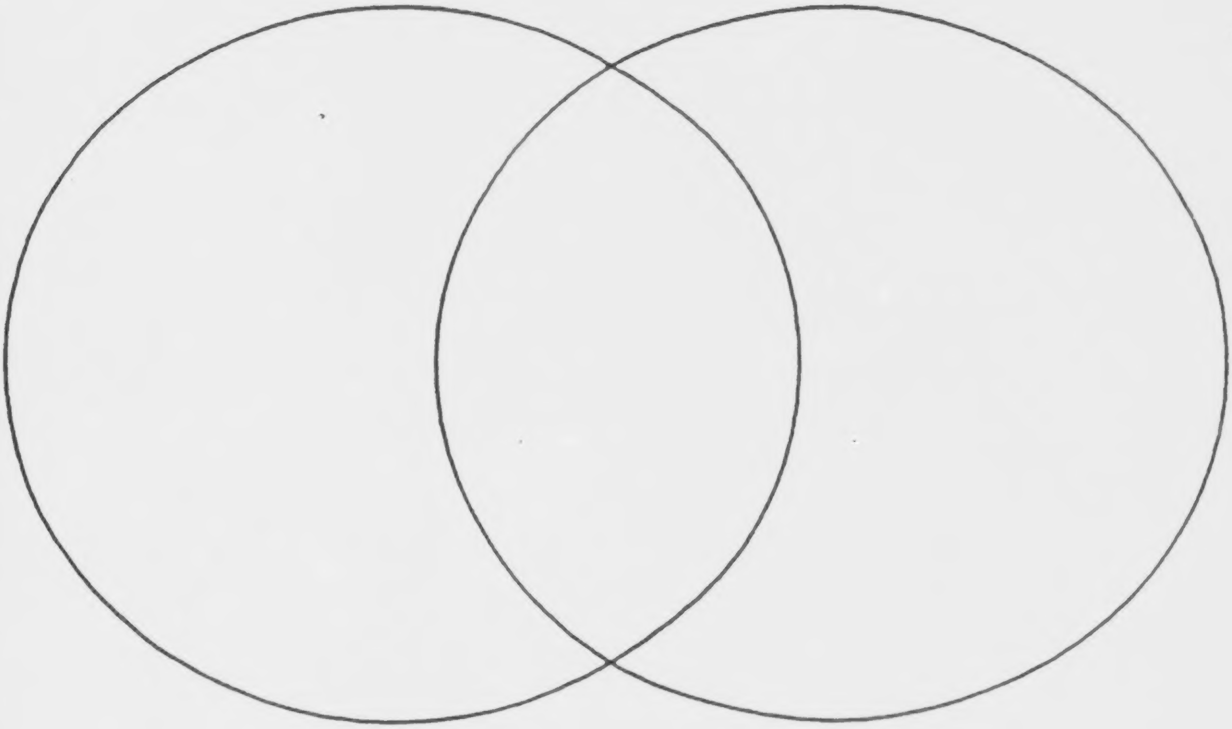
Name ____________________________

Date ____________________________

Title of book ____________________

Page in book ______ Lit Log # _____

Write the prompt:



64

Changes...

Name: ____________________

Directions: -Pick a character or situation from the story.
-Describe how they or it changed during the story.
-Focus on **thoughts, feelings, and personality**, not events. (Use the events as examples of the thought, feeling or personality change being described.)

In the beginning ____________________

As time went on ____________________

In the end ____________________

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Brian Skaar98

EMOTIONS SHEET

Name ______________________

Date ______________________

Title of book ________________

Page in book ______ Lit Log # ______

Write the prompt:

Emotions	Author's words

Why the author's words have this effect

Emotions	Author's words

Why the author's words have this effect

State Multiple Choice Reporting Categories
Grade 8

Word Meaning

Recognize and know the meaning of words through the use of the following aids to comprehension:

- Context
- Illustrations and graphics
- Figurative expressions
- Knowledge of common words in other forms (prefixes, suffixes, synonyms, root words, contractions and possessives)
- Language Structure/Syntax
- Background knowledge
- Punctuation and print conventions

Locating Information

Locate information in supportive materials (i.e., dictionaries, atlases, encyclopedias, almanacs, newspapers, magazines, catalogs) and clarify meaning by using a variety of reading strategies:

- Skimming
- Scanning
- Close Reading

Sources of Information

- Charts
- Graphs
- Headings
- Indexes
- Tables of Contents
- Diagrams
- Glossaries
- Tables

Literal Comprehension

Identify and/or recall information explicitly stated in a passage relating to the following features:

- Sequence of events
- Main ideas
- Supporting details including key words, phrases or sentences
- Facts
- Opinions

Literary Elements and Devices

Identify literary elements and their contribution to the author's purpose:

Literary Elements:

- Character
- Plot
- Setting (as used to establish mood, place and time period)
- Theme
- Style
- Point of View

Literary Devices

- Figurative Language (metaphor, simile, personification)
- Allusion
- Sound devices (alliteration, rhyme, onomatopoeia)
- Versification (rhyme scheme, rhythm, free verse in poetry)
- Foreshadowing
- Imagery
- Irony
- Hyperbole (exaggeration)
- Dialect used in dialogue or narration

Inferential Comprehension

Use information explicitly stated in a passage to determine what is not stated; make predictions and draw conclusions about

- Relationships (Cause and effect, sequence/time, comparisons, classifications and generalizations)
- Events that could logically follow.
- Symbols
- Patterns
- Images

Evaluative Comprehension

Analyze and evaluate information or the validity of an argument, action or policy by forming conclusions about the selection in the following areas:

- Reasons for actions
- Accuracy of information
- Use of facts versus opinions
- Presence of biases or stereotypes
- Use of propaganda or other persuasion techniques
- How the selection can be related to other issues or situations

Literary Forms

Identify various forms of literature and the qualities that distinguish them. Literary forms include:

- Novels
- Short stories (humor, fable, mystery, folktale, historical fiction, science fiction, realistic fiction)
- Nonfiction (informational article, biography, autobiography)
- Poems
- Plays

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Reading Response Checklist

Grades 4-8

This checklist describes the three areas of the reading scoring guide. Below each heading are statements that summarize the information from the reading scoring guide. Use this checklist to make sure each of your responses is clear and complete.

Comprehension

☐ My responses show that I really understand the selection, including the beginning, middle, and end and how they relate to each other.

☐ I do more than tell what happened in the selection; I tell what I think about the selection; what it means, and what I learned.

☐ I show that I can "read between the lines."

Extending Understanding

☐ I explain when the selection makes me think of something I've done, read about or seen before.

☐ I show where and how this selection means something to me personally.

☐ I compare or contrast this selection with other things I have read or personal experiences I have had.

Reading Critically: Text Analysis

☐ I use examples to explain my opinion about how the selection is written.

☐ I identify writing techniques the author uses and what effect they have.

☐ I question and make comments about the writing of the selection and show different ways to think about the message.

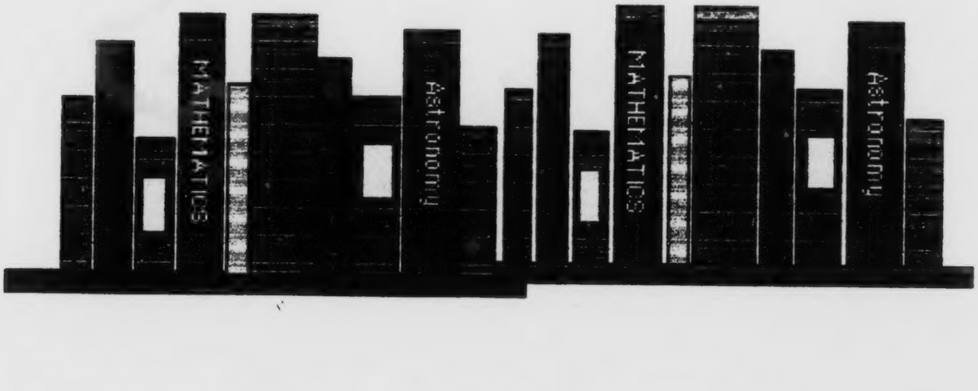
R.E.A.D. in Montana

Callie Epstein, Shelly Wanty, Peggy Taylor, and Jetta Johnson
Cut Bank School District, Montana

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

R.E.A.D. WORKSHOP ASSESSMENTS WRITTEN BY THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE WORKSHOP

These assessments were the assignment given to the teachers who participated in our workshop - R.E.A.D. in Montana. After presenting each trait of an effective reader, we felt the best evaluation and the most usable product would be an assessment of a book used in the classroom. We hope you will find these assessments using the traits of an effective reader as valuable as we did. Also, these provide great ideas and examples for writing your own assessments.



The Traits of an Effective Reader

Handout #1

Decoding Conventions:

decoding words
decoding symbols
decoding grammar and punctuation
reading aloud with sentence fluency
recognizing genre and mode
oral fluency enhances meaning of text

Establishing Comprehension:

establishing plot
selecting main ideas
distinguishing between major and minor characters
distinguishing between significant and supporting details
describing turning moments, conflicts, resolutions
creating a purposeful summary

Realizing Context:

finding vocabulary reflective of the text
describing setting
describing historical time period
finding evidence of social issues
realizing cultural overtones

Developing Interpretations:

locating problems, ambiguities and gaps in texts
selecting clues and evidence to analyze problems
revising interpretations with new information
connecting interpretations to a bigger picture

Integrating for Synthesis:

Put information in order
List, sort, outline information
Compare and contrast
Cause and effect
Compare to personal background experience
Use multiple sources to create an "integrated" analysis

Critiquing for Evaluation:

Experimenting with ideas
Expressing opinions
Raising questions
Challenging the text
Challenging the author
Noting bias and distortion
Distinguishing between fact and opinion

THE SIX TRAITS OF AN EFFECTIVE READER

JETTA JOHNSON, PEGGY TAYLOR, SHELLY WANTY, CALLIE EPSTEIN

SIOUX CITY SUE

BY BRUCE AND CHARLOTTE WHITEHEAD

DECODING

1.WHY ARE THE CHARACTER'S NAMES CAPITALIZED?
2.MAKE A TITLE PAGE FOR THE STORY.

COMPREHENSION

1.NAME THE MAJOR AND MINOR CHARACTERS AND TELL WHY.
2.WHAT IS THE STORY'S THEME?

REALIZING CONTEXT

1.IN WHAT TIME PERIOD DOES THIS PLAY TAKE PLACE? GIVE EVIDENCE.
2.WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN THE LONE RIDER SAYS ," YOU VARMITS ARE GOING TO THE CALABOOSE."?

DEVELOPING INTERPRETATION

1.WHY DOES THE AUTHOR HAVE SIOUX CITY SUE APPEAR SO HELPLESS WHEN SHE REALLY IS THE MARSHALL?

INTEGRATING FOR SYNTHESIS

1.ILLUSTRATE THE EVENTS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER. WRITE CAPTIONS FOR EACH FRAME.

CRITIQUING FOR EVALUATION

1.WILL THE LONE RIDER BE BETTER WITH OR WITHOUT SIOUX CITY SUE? STATE YOUR REASONS.
2.WRITE A LETTER TO SIOUX CITY SUE TELLING HER WHY YOU WOULD OR WOULD NOT NOMINATE HER FOR PRESIDENT.

CREATING READERS WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Frog & Toad Are Friends – by Arnold Lobel **Gail King-Schlosser/Linda Garnett**
Story – The Surprise R.L. 1-2 Grade level – 2

Decoding ?
1. What is the title of the story?
2. Who wrote the story?

Comprehension ?
1. Identify the main characters of the story. Describe them.
2. Explain what happens at the end of the story.

Context ?
1. What time of year does the story take place?
2. Illustrate your favorite part of the story. Tell why it is your favorite part.
3. Underline the best word that describes the characters Frog & Toad. Tell why you chose that word.
   Friends caring neighbors

Interpretation ?
1. What problems do Frog and Toad have?
2. Why does Frog rake up Toad's leaves and Toad rake up Frog's leaves?
3. How does the wind create a new problem for Frog and Toad?
4. What can Frog and Toad do to solve the problem of the wind?

Synthesis ?
1. The following events took place in the story "The Surprise". Put a number (1) in front of the sentence that describes the first event. Then number the other sentences in the order in which they happened in the story.

____ A wind came. It blew across the land.
____ "I will go to Toad's house," said Frog. I will rake all of the leaves that have fallen on his lawn. Toad will be surprised.
____ It was October. The leaves had fallen off the trees.
____ Toad looked out his window. "These messy leaves have covered everything," said Toad. "I will run over to Frog's house." "I will rake all of his leaves" Frog will be very pleased.

2. Answer the following question.
   Have you ever surprised a friend, and how did it make you feel?

Evaluation ?
1. Explain why Frog and Toad are happy when they go to bed.
2. Do you think Frog and Toad are friends? Explain why or why not.
3. Is there something Frog and Toad can do so that the leaves will not blow away the next time? Explain your answer.

Miss Rumphius **BARB**

Decoding
1. What do you notice about the pictures on page 5 and page 26?
2. What person is this story written in?
3. Why is the word almost in italics? (pg. 15)
4. What pattern does this story follow?

Establish Comprehension

1. Who are the major and minor characters?
2. Describe a turning moment in the story.

Realizing Content

1. Does this story take place in our time period? Explain/support with details.
2. How will the great-niece continue on in the Miss R tradition as asked on the last page of the story?

Developing Interpretation

1. List two major problems. Provide an analysis that explains the problem.
2. What has Miss R taught you about life?

Integrating for Synthesis

1. List three characteristics of character that Miss R and Great Aunt Arizona have in common. Explain why.
2. List four important turning points in the story Miss Rumphius. Place them in order.

Critiquing for Evaluation

1. Judge which picture in the book best illustrates Miss R's character. Explain your choice.
2. In your opinion, was Miss R happy with the choices she made for her life?

Stellaluna by Janell Cannon **Charlene Lensing/Nancy McKinley**

Decoding Conventions

1. Can you tell me what kind of story is Stellaluna? (*Prompt: fiction or non-fiction)
2. Look for and find the word, Stellaluna on any page.

Establishing Comprehension

1. Who is the main character of the story?
2. Retell how Stellaluna got separated from her mother.

Realizing Context

1. How did Stellaluna feel about learning to live like a bird?
2. Underline the words that describe Stellaluna when she met the other bats.
   Surprised/happy/afraid/confused ... Choose one word and tell why Stellaluna would feel that way.

Developing Interpretation

1. What is the problem that Mama bird had with Stellaluna?
2. Can you tell me how you know this is a problem?
3. How was the problem fixed (resolved)?
4. Would you fix the problem like Stellaluna did? Explain.

Integrating for Synthesis

1. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast birds and bats.
2. Number the following sentences, putting them in order from 1 to 4.

____ The bats find Stellaluna perched in a tree.
____ Stellaluna landed in a nest.
____ Stellaluna went flying with Pip, Flap, and Flitter.
____ An owl swooped down upon the bats.

Critiquing for Evaluation

1. Explain why Stellaluna went back to visit Pip, Flap, and Flitter.
2. What do you think the author wanted you to learn from the idea of a bat living with birds?

Stellaluna **Julie Orcutt/Shelley Will**

Decoding Conventions

1. Identify the genre of the text?
2. Specify the types of animals?

Establishing Comprehension

1. Explain Stellaluna's problem.
2. What is the "turning point" in the story?

Realizing Context

1. What is Janell Cannon's purpose in writing this story?
2. Find words that describe Stellaluna's feelings living with the birds.

Developing Interpretation

1. What background do you need to know about bats and birds to best understand "Stellaluna"?
2. Why did the mother bird treat Stellaluna as one of her own?

Integrating for Synthesis

1. Compare a bird's diet to a bat's?
2. Develop a new story sequence using the storybook pictures.

Critiquing for Evaluation

1. Explain why the characters remain friends.
2. Justify this statement: "How can we be seen different and feel so much alike?"

Zack's Alligator by Shirley Mozelle **Debbie Wickum (K-8)/Wendy Gierke (K)**

Decoding ?

1. Show me where people are talking?
2. Why did the author use growing letters in the word larger?
3. What type of story is this?

Comprehension

1. List the main characters and use three describing words for each.
2. In one or two sentences, explain the story's main idea.
3. What happens in the beginning, middle, and end of the story?

Realizing Context

1. Why does Bridget keep changing size in the story?
2. Please describe in your own words/or draw the "Glades".
3. As an extension, write what you think would happen the next day when Zack waters Bridget?
4. Please circle the vocabulary words that "belong" to the story:
   alligator faucet monkey lampshade hollered fountain tennis rocket merry-go-round

Developing Interpretation

1. What are three problems in the story, Zack's Alligator?
2. How did Zack overcome a problem caused by Bridget's actions?
3. Develop a time line of Bridget's growth in the story compared to the growth of the alligator experiment done in class.

Integrating for Synthesis
1. List the four events of the story in order.
2. Explain the cause/effect relationship between water and Bridget!
3. Did you ever have a dog or pet and how did the pet make you feel?
4. Using the stories Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile and Zack's Alligator, create a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the stories.

Critiquing for Evaluation
1. What clues do the pictures give you, to what is happening in the story?
2. Do you think Zack should water Bridget? Support your answer.
3. What qualities make a good pet? In your opinion, would Bridget make a good pet?

The Wolf's Chicken Stew by Keiko Kasza Mary Helen Topley/Alma Swan/Marianne Stoddard

Decoding
1. Who is the author?
2. Is your text a story, a poem, or a play?
3. Is the text real or make believe? How do you know?
4. What do the three dots mean at the end of "But just as he was about to grab his prey…"?

Comprehension
1. Who are the major and minor characters?
2. Identify turning points and tell what happened.
3. Why did the wolf do so much baking?

Realize Content
1. Where does the story take place?
2. Who is telling the story?
3. Over how many days did the story take place?
4. If you were the chicken and invited the wolf for supper, what would you serve?

Developing Interpretation
1. Identify a problem in the story. Explain how you know that is a problem. Give evidence.
2. Why did the wolf change his mind about eating the chicken.

Integrating for Synthesis
1. How are the chicken and the wolf in the text like chickens and wolves in nature?
2. Put the pictures from the text in order.

Critiquing for Evaluation
1. Is the wolf in the story a good wolf or a bad wolf? Why?
2. Did you like the story? Why or why not?

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs Heidi A. Owens

Decoding Conventions
1. Why does the first word on some of the pages begin with a capital that is a picture?
2. When are quotation marks used in the story? Who is speaking?

Comprehension Questions

1. Describe what happens to make the main character first come into contact with a pig.
2. What does the wolf do at the third little pig's that draws attention to what he is doing?

Developing Interpretation

1. What problem does the wolf have with each pig?
2. How does the wolf solve the problem with the pig each time?

Realizing Context

1. Write one word that describes how the wolf feels the pigs treat him.
2. Circle the word that describes the tone of the text. humorous/serious Choose and write one sentence from the text that proves your choice.

Integrating Synthesis

1. Compare and contrast The True Story of the Three Little Pigs with the original The Three Little Pigs. Give three ways they are alike and three ways they are different.
2. Pick five events that happen in the story and put them in the correct order of when they occur.

Critiquing for Evaluation

1. Decide if you believe or do not believe the wolf's side of the story. Use examples from the story that support your opinion.
2. When the wolf goes to trial will he get off or will he be found guilty? Support your answer with facts from the story.

Hot Hippo by Mwenye Hadithi **Jeanne Haugestuen/JoEve Aikens**

Decoding Conventions

1. Read your favorite part of the story out loud with expression.
2. What does the author want you to do when he writes in ALL CAPITALS?

Comprehension

1. What is the turning point in the story?
2. Name the major and minor characters and tell why.

Realizing context

1. Describe the setting with watercolor pictures.
2. Choose another African animal with a problem.

Developing Interpretations

1. What is Hippo's problem?
2. How is the problem resolved? Would other resolutions have been possible?
3. What can we learn from Hippo?

Integrating for Synthesis

1. Compare and contrast two pourquios tales.
2. Name similarities and differences between Ngai and Hippo.
3. Retell the story in sequential order with guidance (use pictures, story map, or own words).

Critiquing for Evaluation

1. Write a letter to the author sharing your thoughts.
2. Is there anything you would ask Ngai to change?
3. Will Hippo be happy now? Why or why not?

Teach Us, Amelia Bedelia by Peggy Parish **Faye Hart/Twila Vick**

Decoding Conventions
1. Write the title of the book and the name of the author.
2. What do the quotation marks mean in this sentence: "I'm coming. I'm coming," said Amelia Bedelia.

Realizing Context
1. List homophones from the story.
2. Illustrate what Amelia Bedelia thinks the following sentence means. Then draw another illustration of what it really means. "We have to practice our play."

Developing Interpretations
1. What problems did Amelia Bedelia have? or Why did A.B. roll the roll on the ground?
2. What does A.B. think the meaning of the word "roll" is in the sentence "Call the roll"?
3. Write three sentences using a different meaning of roll in each sentence.

Integrating for Synthesis
1. Put the following sentences in order.
2. Have you ever been confused by what someone has told you to do? Write about your experience.

Critiquing for Evaluation
1. Would you like A.B. to be your teacher? Why or why not?
2. Write a "Dear Author" letter and share your favorite part.

Sacajawea by Della Rowland **Frederickson**

Decode
1. What genre is this story?
2. Pick your favorite part of the story and read it to me using expression in your voice.

Comprehension
1. Name three characters in the story. Two major and one minor.
2. What is the main focus that all the characters are working towards?

Context
1. What are three of the best words to describe Lewis? educated red-haired warm, outgoing moody loner friendly sad
2. What are three words that best describe Clark? red-haired moody warm, outgoing mapmaker educated

Interpretation
1. What could you learn from Sacajawea?
2. What do Lewis and Clark hope to achieve in the story?

Synthesis
1. Compare and contrast Lewis and Clark's traits. Use Venn diagram.
2. Put these events in order.

____ Lewis and Clark meet with President Jefferson with maps and journals describing their trip.
____ Sacajawea is captured by Minnetaree Indians and is taken to their village as a slave.
____ Sacajawea is sold to a white fur trader.
____Lewis and Clark hire Charbueno and Sacajawea to be guides.
____ The expedition views the Pacific Ocean.
____Clark educated Sacajawea's son.

Evaluation
1. Do you believe Sacajawea was important to the expedition? Why ?
2. Write a letter to Sacajawea from Clark, after the expedition was over.
3. State Lewis and Clark's goal. In your own words, tell how this goal was met.

Class Clown by Johanna Hursvitz **Jan Knapton/Marian More**

Decoding
1. What is the difference between the words Obstreperous and Obstetrician?
2. What type of book is this?

Comprehension
1. Identify the main character?
2. Describe two conflicts that Lucas is involved in.

Context
1. Please circle the vocabulary words that belong to this story. funny curious ridiculous shy obedient quiet
2. Please describe two different settings from this story.

Developing Interpretation
1. If you were the teacher, how could you help Lucas become the "Perfect Person"?
2. What evidence can you find I the story that shows Lucas was trying the become a "Perfect Student"?

Synthesis
1. Please list three characteristics that show how Lucas and Cricket are different. Explain.
2. Have you ever been in trouble in school? What was the problem and what was the result?

Evaluation
1. Explain what you think Lucas's behavior will be like in fourth grade.
2. Write a Dear Mrs. Hockaday letter telling why "Hockaday wasn't such a bad teacher." Pg. 92

The War With Grandpa **Barb Mercer**

Decoding
1. Who is telling the story and why?
2. Why is it hard to read some of the larger paragraphs?

Composition
1. Why didn't Pete want to give up his room?
2. Name two minor characters and tell how they were important in the war.

Context
1. Brainstorm on the word war. What does this word mean to you?
2. When you get to be an older person, and cannot take care of yourself, how would you want to be treated?

Interpretation
1. Name two problems in the story and tell how you would solve them.
2. Would you recommend this book to a friend and why?

Synthesis
1. List three ways in which Pete and his grandpa were alike, and three ways they were different.
2. If your grandfather were coming to live with you and you had to give up your room, how would you react?

Comprehension
1. Do you think that Pete could have solved his problem without going to war?
2. Who was your favorite character and why?

Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor Enneberg/Linnell/Beckedahl/Stevens

Decoding
1. Who is telling the story? How do you know?
2. Select a passage to read aloud. Practice and share.

Comprehension
1. Explain the main problem or conflict in this story.
2. Name and describe the major and minor characters.

Realizing Context
1. Find five terms or expressions which help explain the characters' cultural background!
2. Describe the setting, noting details from the text!

Developing Interpretations
1. How does Marty's relationship with his parents change because of his connection to Shiloh? Explain your answer.
2. What new problems does the arrival of the German Shephard cause Marty's family?

Integrating for Synthesis
1. Compare and contrast, using a Venn Diagram, Shiloh's life with Marty and with Judd.
2. List two cause and effect events in the story and label them as cause or effect.

Critiquing for Evaluation
1. Defend why Marty should keep Shiloh.
2. What other methods might Marty have used to save Shiloh and the other dogs?

Rescue Josh McGuire Ben Mikaelsen/Linda Luther/Donovan Grubb

Decoding
1. What is a black bear sow?
2. What kind of book is this and explain your answer?

Comprehension
1. What does Josh mean when he says…"Say, Otis…if Dad doesn't believe you, just tell him I'm not Mookee Man."
2. What does the author mean by a coat-hanger-in-the-mouth smile?
3. Identify the main characters in the story.

Realizing Context
1. Where in Montana does this story take place?
2. What is Ben Mikaelsen's purpose in writing this book?

Interpretation

1. What internal conflict is Sam struggling with?
2. Explain the relationship between Josh and his Dad as it develops throughout the book.

Synthesize

1. Compare and contrast Josh's parents, Libby and Sam, (or Sam and Libby).
2. What effect has Sam's drinking had on his family?

Evaluation

1. Do you think Josh and his Dad will go bear hunting again? Explain your answer.
2. Do you think Josh will use alcohol when he is older? Explain your answer.☺

The Iceberg Hermit **Peggy DeVries/Margy Johnson**

Decoding

1. Identify the character that is the hermit.
2. Who is telling the story?

Comprehension

1. In your own words, summarize three significant details of Allan's stay on the iceberg.
2. Describe how Allan felt when the whaling boats failed to rescue him.

Realizing Context

1. Describe the role of whaling fleets of Scotland in 1757.
2. Compare Allan's predicament to Kevin Costner's in the movie Water World.

Developing Interpretations

1. Write a letter you think Nancy, Allan's fiance, could have written to him while he was gone…where would she believe he is; what would she think has happened to him…and does she believe he is coming back?
2. Using clues and evidence from the book, interpret why it was important for Allan to "domesticate" the polar bear?

Integrating for Synthesis

1. List four important turning points in the book. Place them in chronological order. Star the one you feel is most important and explain why.
2. List three cause and effect events that happened in the book. Explain how one effect later becomes the next cause.

Critiquing for Evaluation

1. Decide if the relationship between Allan and the loear, Nancy, is a positive or negative one. Using clues, details, and quotes from the book, explain why the relationship was positive or negative.
2. Do you believe Allan's story is TRUE, FALSE, or partly TRUE and partly FALSE. Defend your position with details from the story.

Charlotte's Web **Lynn Durham/Amy Wangseng/Patty VandenBos/Hallie Rowlison**

Decoding

1. Identify the author of Charlotte's Web.
2. What genre does Charlotte's Web belong to?

Comprehension

1. Name three main characters and use three words to describe the characters.
2. Describe one turning point in the story.

Context

1. Describe in your own words the atmosphere at the fair.
2. Create a spider web (like Charlotte's) with a word that describes Wilbur.

Interpretation

1. Identify one problem in the story and how it was resolved.
2. Make a hypothesis whether any of Charlotte's children will be a true friend to someone.

Synthesis

1. List two cause and effect events that happened in Charlotte's Web.
2. List, in chronological order, five important events in the story.

Evaluation

1. Defend the statement that Wilbur said, "There will never be another Charlotte."
2. With a partner, write a dialogue journal about how the story makes you feel.

Developing Reading through Writing

Susan Marchese
Coupeville Elementary School, Washington

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

AN INTRODUCTION...

Books are at the heart of any classroom, or should be. Because reading is the key to all learning, children need to have access to books, many books and of all types. Through the years of my teaching profession, I have gathered hundreds of books that spew over shelves, counters and book boxes. Making books available to my students is one way I address the need of creating "good readers." Modeling is another. I love to read, and they see that everyday. I "own" books and children begin to "own" them, too. Maybe not the same stories or the same poems, but a collection that grows into their own. With effective reading practices and assessment, I believe that my students become passionate about books and therefore, lifelong readers.

Susan M. Marchese, a primary educator for 12 years, teaches a multiage classroom in Coupeville, WA. She earned her master's degree in Elementary Education at Western Washington University with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education and Reading. Currently, Susan serves on the Northwest Assessment Team for her district and is a member of the Literacy in Reading Team out of Northwest ESD in Mt. Vernon, WA.

Teaching students of mixed ages, 6-9, in one room, has been the love of Susan's teaching career. It was her first group of multiage students who taught Susan all about the enthusiasm kids have for books. Since then, Susan devotes her time learning more about effective reading strategies and building up an already sound practice of writing to enhance her multiage program. Susan's practices and love for reading is portrayed in the 1998 fall issue of *NW Education* (NWREL publication), "Leading With the Heart."

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Essential Academic Learning Requirements

Read with Comprehension

- Uses skills and strategies
- Comprehends
- Learns new information, performs tasks, experiences literature, and reads for career applications
- Sets goals and evaluates progress

The Essential Academic Learning Requirements in Reading

1. **The student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read.**
   To meet this standard, the student will:
   1.1 use word recognition and word meaning skills to read and comprehend text (such as phonics, context clues, picture clues, and word origins; roots, prefixes, and suffixes of words)
   1.2 build vocabulary through reading
   1.3 read fluently, adjusting reading for purpose and material
   1.4 understand elements of literature—fiction (such as story elements, use of humor, exaggeration, and figures of speech)
   1.5 use features of nonfiction text and computer software (such as titles, headings, pictures, maps, and charts to find and understand specific information)
2. **The student understands the meaning of what is read.**
   To meet this standard, the student will:
   2.1 comprehend important ideas and details
   2.2 expand comprehension by analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing information and ideas
   2.3 think critically and analyze authors' use of language, style, purpose, and perspective
3. **The student reads different materials for a variety of purposes.**
   To meet this standard, the student will:
   3.1 read to learn new information (such as reading science and mathematics texts, technical documents, and for personal interest)
   3.2 read to perform a task (such as using schedules, following directions, filling out job applications, and solving problems)
   3.3 read for literary experience (in a variety of forms such as novels, short stories, poems, plays, and essays to understand self and others)
   3.4 read for career applications
4. **The student sets goals and evaluates progress to improve reading.**
   To meet this standard, the student will:
   4.1 assess strengths and need for improvement
   4.2 seek and offer feedback to improve reading
   4.3 develop interests and share reading experiences

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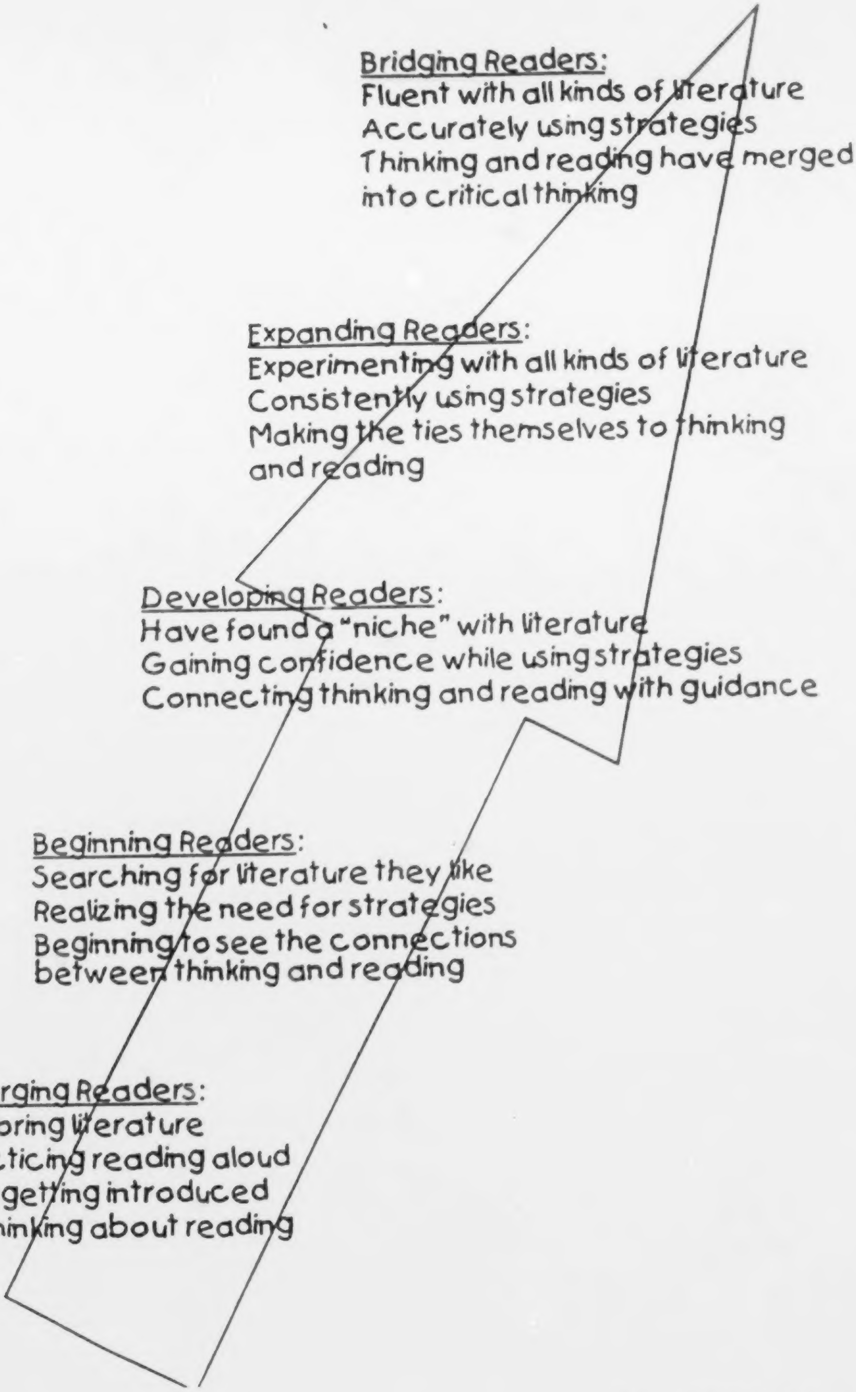
The Traits of an Effective Reader
Kindergarten - 3rd Grade
Developmental Continuum



Bridging Readers:
Fluent with all kinds of literature
Accurately using strategies
Thinking and reading have merged
into critical thinking

Expanding Readers:
Experimenting with all kinds of literature
Consistently using strategies
Making the ties themselves to thinking
and reading

Developing Readers:
Have found a "niche" with literature
Gaining confidence while using strategies
Connecting thinking and reading with guidance

Beginning Readers:
Searching for literature they like
Realizing the need for strategies
Beginning to see the connections
between thinking and reading

Emerging Readers:
Exploring literature
Practicing reading aloud
Just getting introduced
to thinking about reading

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STUDENT FRIENDLY READING STRATEGIES

♥I recognize *conventions* in texts and read them with purpose and expression in my voice.

♥I use my words to paint a picture of a text when I practice *comprehension.*

♥I put myself in the author's shoes when I read for *intention.*

♥I make good guesses, fill in the gaps, and solve problems through predictions when I *interpret* texts.

♥I put things in order, compare and contrast, and determine what happens and why when I *synthesize* texts.

♥I make good judgments, think thoughtfully and even question the author when I *evaluate* texts.

Using the Traits to Elicit Written or Oral Responses

Some suggested questions

TEXTUAL CONVENTIONS ... what kind of text is this?
...what is a good title for this story?
...who is the author. Where did you find his name?
...find when the story was written.

LITERAL COMPREHENSION...what is the text about?
...identify the main idea.
...what is the plot?
...distinguish between the major/minor characters.
...what is the turning point?
...summarize the story.
...what happens in the beg./mid./end of the story?

CONTEXT/INTENTION ...what is the context for this text?
...describe the setting.
...compare the character in the story to your own life.
...which word best describes the character...why?

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INTERPRETATION ...write two questions you have for this text?
...identify a problem, then gather clues and evidence.
...what did you learn from the text?

SYNTHESIS ...what else can you compare this text to?
...compare and contrast...
...cause and effect...
...put the important events of the story in order.
...imagine you were the main character...
... make a list...
..how did the story make you feel?

EVALUATION...what did this text make you think about?
...state you opinion on....
...do you argree with the author on...?
...what do you think about the...in the text?
...true statement or untrue? Explain your answer.

Adapted from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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Evoking Images in the Reader's Workshop: Some Key Ideas*

- Proficient readers spontaneously and purposefully create mental images while and after they read. The images emerge from all five senses, as well as the emotions and are anchored in a reader's prior knowledge.

- Proficient readers use images to immerse themselves in rich detail as they read. The detail gives depth and dimension to the reading, engaging the reader more deeply, making the text more memorable.

- Proficient readers use images to draw conclusions, to create distinct and unique interpretations of the text, to recall details significant to the text, and to recall a text after it has been read. Images from reading frequently become the reader's writing. Images from a reader's personal experience frequently become part of his or her comprehension.

- Proficient readers adapt their images as they continue to read. Images are revised to incorporate new information revealed through the text and new interpretations as they are developed by the reader.

- Proficient readers understand how creating images enhances their comprehension.

- Proficient readers adapt their images in response to the shared images of other readers.

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*Keene, E. and Zimmermann, S. 1997. *Mosaic of Thought*. Portsmouth, NH:Heinemann

A Guide to using Imagery as an "Extended Response"

- Modeling - the goal is to help students understand that imagery enhances comprehension

- Short Selections - teacher directed lessons are used to show his or her own thinking out loud

- Student Responses - students are invited to share and expand their own images created as he or she reads

- Reading Conferences -
  - -Focus on images children have when reading
  - -Ask children to read and think aloud about their images
  - -Guide students to distinguish between images that are critical to understanding the text and those that are not

- Sharing Sessions - students share their images and how those images helped them comprehend what they read

- Whole Group Lessons - use a variety of genre

- Portfolio/Assessment - Look for:
  - -Images that are central to understanding key points
  - -Images that are detailed and richly descriptive
  - -Images that extend and enhance the text
  - -Images that come from all the senses and the emotions
  - -Images that are adapted and revised
  - -Images from text that find new life in the child's writing

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Imagery

A Lesson Plan for Reading

Objective: To 'enhance comprehension

1. Choose a passage or text:______________________________
   - Teacher re-aloud
   - Overhead passage
   - Independent reading

2. Encourage students to share what they imagined.

3. Students sketch an immediate impression, image or questions from the text.
   - Response (or Reader's) Log
   - Activity sheet

4. Optional: Written Response "or" Oral Response

   Which reading trait do you want to work on?______________

   Question to ask students: ______________________________

   ____

5. Assessment: Will you be using a rubrics to assess the students' work? If so, what are you looking for?

Draw a picture of what you imagine the writing to be about.

How does this writing make you feel? Why?

LITERATURE CIRCLES

Teacher selects three of four books and gives a summary of each. Books are chosen based on specific literary qualities such as characterization, plot, or theme. Students sign up for the book of their choice. These heterogeneous groups meet daily with their group members to read, have discussions, respond to the text in "Reading Journals" and celebrate when completing the book.

In assessing this model, look for:

-discussion after each page (or during)

-asking questions

-supporting ideas and opinions

-okay to disagree

-varied responses in discussion and journals (e.g. I notice..., I think..., I feel..., I wonder..., This reminds me of...)

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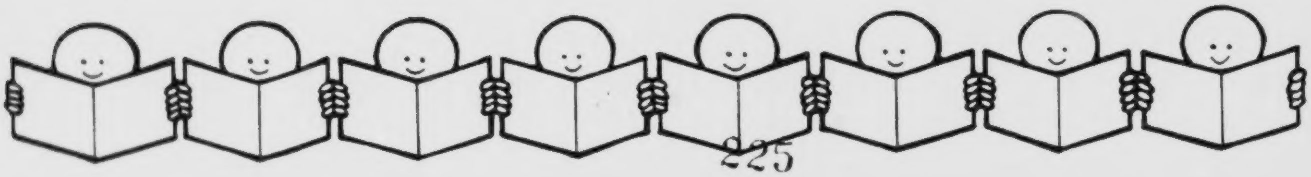

Literature Discussion Questions

1. Where and when does the story take place? How do you know?
2. What situation or problem does the author use to get the story started?
3. Did the story end the way you expected it to?
4. Is there one character in the story you know better than the others? How does the author let you know about the character?
5. What questions would you ask the author?
6. Who is telling the story? How would the story change if someone else were telling it?
7. Does the main character in the story change over time?
8. What have you noticed so far?
9. If you could be any character in the book, who would you choose? Why?
10. Why do you suppose the author gave the book this title?
11. Did you have strong feelings as you read this story? What did the author do to make you feel strongly?

DIALOGUE JOURNAL

In this type of assessment, students, groups, and teachers, respond in writing to one another through the form of a dialogue. The actual "exchange" of information is fluid and determined by choices made by each reader. Teachers and group members can respond to one another by challenging deeper interpretations and perspectives. Lots of open-ended questions posed to one another are highly effective. In assessing this model, look for:

- sincere desire to "scratch the surface"
- willingness to respond to one another authentically
- sensitivity to other's ideas and vulnerability
- concrete, plotted movement through ideas—see them from seed, to seedling, to full blossom
- doesn't have to be too formal
- students can even pose questions for analysis to teachers—"what do you think, Oh wise one?"

DIALOGUE JOURNAL

Ask your partner questions about the story you have just read. Here are some ideas of the kinds of questions you could ask:

* Predict what you think will happen next.

* What clues do the pictures give you to what is happening in the story?

* Has anything like this ever happened to you?

* What is the voice of this author? How does the story make you feel?

* How would you solve the problem in the story?

When you respond to your partner, really let them know what you are feeling about this story.

Partners: ______________________________

DIALOGUE JOURNAL

BOOK:
AUTHOR:

Successful School Shares and Comprehensive Reform Efforts

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

Successful School Share/Comprehensive Reform Efforts

The "Successful School Share" and the "Comprehensive Reform Efforts" sessions at the Assuring Competency in Reading Advisory Conference were staffed by teachers and administrators who are leading their own schools and districts with implementation of large-scale reading reform. This series of presentations was designed to demonstrate for other educators the process, or variety of processes, involved in implementing a standards-based system in reading.

Presentations by Joan McGrath and Kathy Baldwin of Bethel, Alaska, and Nancy Brulotte and Jeane O'Hara of Toppenish, Washington, focused on the underlying issues of culture, ethnicity, and academic success when working with special populations who struggle to read independently and with confidence in grades kindergarten through graduation.

A presentation by Ardis Sparks and Tracy Hamar of Kennewick, Washington outlined the three-year plan their district implemented for reading reform as their educators moved towards a common goal of reading success for all students.

Lastly, a presentation by Kathryn Porterfield and Judi Johnson focused on the essential elements of "model classrooms" and outlined the components of strong colleagial dialogue between teachers, administrators and students.

While their presentations addressed a variety of issues, the success of these schools shares a number of common factors. First, each presentation stressed the importance of defining what good reading means in your classroom, school, and district and setting reading goals based on that vision of good reading. Next, the presentations emphasized the need to create an environment where that reading goal and progress toward that goal is clearly communicated between teachers, students, and administrators. Finally, "Successful School Share" outlined the ways teachers and administrators were able to elicit parent and community support to meet their reading goals.

Abstracts

Model Classroom Project
Spring, 1999
Kathy Porterfield, Mari Donahue, and Judi Johnson
Evergreen School District, Vancouver, Washington

The goal of the Model Classrooms Project is to establish classrooms in grades 4-6 where exemplary literacy education practices are being developed. The project is rooted in the beliefs that writing and reading are inseparable processes and that the best approach to teaching reading and writing is a combination of approaches.

The district's literacy program is designed with a three-prong approach: literacy for enjoyment, literacy to learn, and literacy to do. A diagram of this is included in the text. The authors also include a scoring scale that ranks writing level from 1(beginning) to 6(exemplary). A section entitled "3 C's of Assessment" provides several things for teachers to keep in mind when making assessments. The important points to remember are that assessments must be complete, correct, and comprehensive.

Highlights of the text include a lesson design model. This model provides a lesson format that progresses from goal to criteria to procedure to reflection and to evaluation. This model helps to clarify exactly what teachers want their students to learn, what their expectations are, steps needed to perform the task, reflection about the experience, and proper assessment of effort.

Other highlights include a guided reading planning sheet, an assessment method sheet, and a reading outcomes sheet. The guided reading planning sheet also provides space for teachers to determine reading level, lesson procedure, response, and reflection and evaluation. The reading outcomes sheet is a table which helps teachers to assess reading outcomes such as summarizes, evaluative comprehension, and identifies literary devices and elements. These are helpful resources for teachers increasing their understanding of how children learn to read and how they learn to learn.

Judi Johnson, M.A. (Lewis and Clark) is a Resource Facilitator with Evergreen School District where she coordinates the Model's Project, social studies, and serves on the District Literacy Team. **Kathryn Porterfield,** M.A. (PSU), teaches grade 5/6 in Centennial School District, Portland, OR. She has an extensive background in balanced literacy, working directly with New Zealand's Ministry of Education, the Goodmans, and Richard C. Owens.

Successful School Share

Kathy Baldwin and Joan McGrath
Lower Kuskokwim School District, Alaska

Abstract

In this presentation the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) assert their district philosophy that language is basic to learning. This philosophy insists that language, the integration of reading, writing, listening and speaking, should not be taught as a set of fragmented skills but rather as complementary components. In LKSD , Yup'ik Eskimo and English are the primary languages. The District believes that the language arts curriculum should reflect this reality and that it should foster the English and Yup'ik language skills of students.

LKSD recognizes that students progress at their individual ability levels. It also recognizes that students throughout the district enter schools with varying backgrounds of knowledge that affect learning, program implementation, and teaching strategies. As such, the LKSD has developed secondary reading classes to help high school students

become stronger readers and writers. ELD (English Language Development) One through Four has been developed to assist students in reading, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and writing skills. Many students will be placed in one of these classes based on scores from two assessment instruments.

Highlights of the presentation include the content of the district's "Well Balanced Literacy Program." The activities included in the program are: reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, language opportunities to respond critically and thoughtfully, shared reading, and interactive reading. Another highlight is an overview of the components of the district's ELD 1-4 program. Also included is a set of entrance criteria for ELD 1-4. These criteria are used to determine the reading/writing/language level of students. These criteria are used to determine appropriate ELD courses for students, grades 9-12.

Kathy Baldwin has lived and worked in the Lower Kuskowkwim School District in Bethel, Alaska for twenty years and has taught everything from kindergarten to high school reading classes. She is presently working as a literacy leader where she travels to four different Yup'ik Eskimo villages and work with teachers on their reading and writing programs. **Joan McGrath** is K-12 reading teacher in rural Alaska.

Toppenish High School
1998-99 Reading Program
Nancy Brulotte and T. Jeane O'Hara
Toppenish, Washington

This presentation describes Toppenish High School's 1998-99 reading program, specifically the school's reading improvement plan. Authors Brulotte and O'Hara first present a comprehensive needs assessment which includes demographic information, reading achievement data and patterns, staff development, parent involvement, and current plans.

The authors next present the school's alignment of essential learnings, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This section includes the staff's knowledge of goal. In other words, it is the goal of the Language Arts Department to ensure that all content area teachers also become reading teachers. Other topics presented are reading program alignment to the essential learnings, reading program alignment with research findings, and addressing a full range of learners.

Highlights of the text include the goals and objectives of the plan. This section first offers the school's vision statement and mission statement as well as the three goals and objectives of the reading improvement plan. These goals and objectives are followed by thirty specific action steps that the school will take to achieve their goals. The authors then describe the school's evaluation techniques of the reading improvement plan. Of note is the summary of the plan. The authors state that the extremely low reading proficiency of the students at Toppenish High School has prompted the staff to focus on reading across the content areas. At Toppenish, every teacher is considered a reading teacher.

Brulotte and O'Hara also include sample exercises used in the Language Arts Department. For example, an exercise entitled "Read, Read, Read" is a log of the number of minutes a student spends each day of the week reading, signed by parents. Another exercise is entitled "My Autobiography". This activity poses questions to students who then create an essay from the responses. Examples of questions are 'my best quality is…', 'what most people don't know about me is…', and 'a teacher I will never forget is…' The authors also offer exercises such as "describing a character" and "story map" as well as a single page of reading tips for teens.

Nancy Brulotte is a sixteen-year veteran high school English teacher. She has taught English courses for Yakima Valley Community College, tutored night classes through education division of the Yakima Valley Farm Worker's Clinic, and administered the high school after school peer-tutoring program for three years. She is currently taking classes toward an ESOL certification. **T. Jeane O'Hara** is currently teaching English 9-12, reading, and history in the Migrant Education Program at Toppenish High School. Previously she taught first, third, and fifth bilingual education and high school Spanish. O'Hara has also taught adult ESL programs for Yakima Valley Community College as well as family literacy for Toppenish School District.

Kennewick School District
Comprehensive Reading Plan
Ardis Sparks and Tracy Hamar
Kennewick, Washington

Author Ardis Sparks begins the presentation with the elements of the plan which indicate where the district currently is, where it is going, and where it wants to be. Sparks then discusses the district's 3rd grade reading goal. The goal is that 90% of the students will be reading at grade level by the end of the 3rd grade. However one of their findings is that, in order to reach the 90% goal, students need a score of 194 on the Spring Functional Level Reading Test. Kennewick's plan is based on the idea that there is no "best" reading plan. The district believes that schools need their own plans. Their approach is also grounded in the need for intensive staff development.

One of the highlights of the text is the district's "First Steps" program. First Steps is a classroom resource that helps individual classroom teachers, schools, and educational districts achieve targeted literacy outcomes for students. It attempts to link the assessment of literacy to developmentally appropriate activities and teaching practices. The program is comprised of the "Tutor Course" and the "School Based Course."

Another highlight of the presentation is the "Consortium On Reading Excellence" (C.O.R.E.). CORE provides direct training and school based implementation of a research-based approach to the teaching of reading. The goal of CORE is to help schools develop a balanced researched-based approach to the teaching of reading.

The author also addresses the "Early Identification of Reading Difficulties" and identifies their tools as the second grade state reading test, the second grade functional level test, the first grade reading assessment, and the kindergarten phonemic awareness assessment.

Sparks finally outlines the district' s Creating Readers and Thinkers Elementary Standards and Accountability, Middle School Standards Accountability and Program Reconfiguration, and Implementation into Middle and High School programs.

Tracy Hamar is a fourth and fifth grade multiage teacher at Southgate Elementary in Kennewick, Washington. She graduated with her B.A. from Northwest College and is currently pursuing a master's degree in reading and literacy. **Ardis Sparks** is from the Kennewick School District, where she has been a classroom teacher for eighteen years, with experience teaching grades 1-5. She currently teaches 4th and 5th grade reading and language arts. She is also the Kennewick School District Language Arts and Literacy Specialist. She works with grades K-12, training and supporting teachers in developing and implementing instruction and assessment to help students reach the benchmark levels in reading.

Model Classrooms Project

Kathy Porterfield, Mari Donohue, Judi Johnson

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Advisory Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

Model Classrooms Project

Spring, 1999

Prepared for the
Evergreen School District by:

Kathy Porterfield, Centennial School District

Mari Donohue, Portland Public Schools

Judi Johnson, Evergreen School District

Model Classroom Project
Spring, 1999
Kathy Porterfield, Mari Donahue, and Judi Johnson
Evergreen School District

Abstract

The goal of the Model Classrooms Project is to establish classrooms in grades 4-6 where exemplary literacy education practices are being developed. The project is rooted in the beliefs that writing and reading are inseperable processes and that the best approach to teaching reading and writing is a combination of approaches.

The district's literacy program is designed with a three-prong approach: literacy for enjoyment, literacy to learn, and literacy to do. A diagram of this is included in the text. The authors also include a scoring scale that ranks writing level from 1(beginning) to 6(exemplary). A section entitled "3 C's of Assessment" provides several things for teachers to keep in mind when making assessments. The important points to remember are that assessments must be complete, correct, and comprehensive.

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The text concludes with a pictograph assessment worksheet that assesses the creation and completion of a project.

Evergreen School District 114

Model Classrooms Project

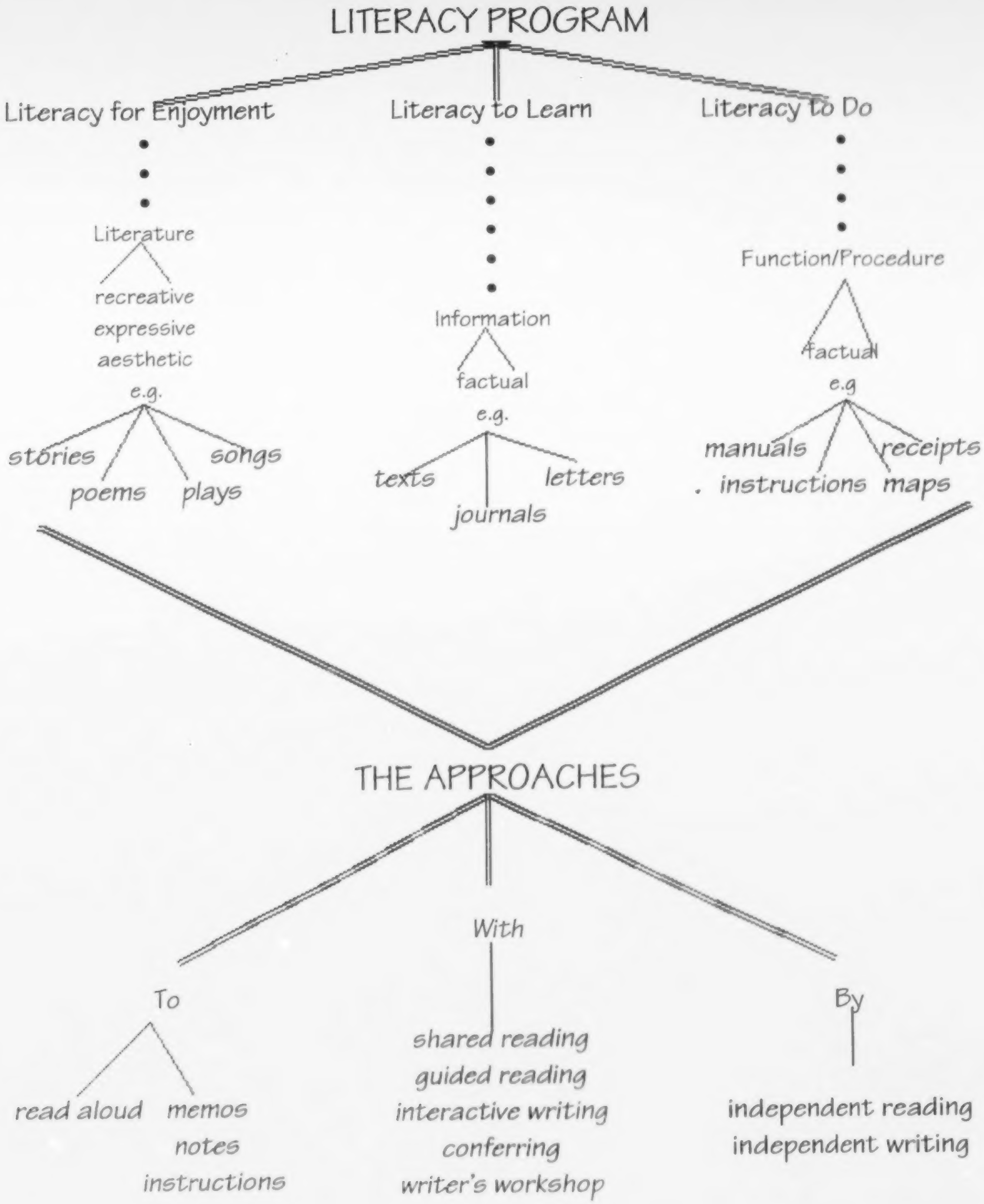
The goal of the Model Classrooms Project is to establish classrooms in grades 4-6 where exemplary literacy education practices are being developed. In our project, teachers increase their understanding of how children learn to read and how they learn to learn. Using the New Zealand model, this year-long training includes focused training in balanced literacy instruction, assessment, classroom environment and collaboration.

Our project is rooted in the following beliefs about literacy learning and teaching:

- Reading and writing experiences should be student-centered
- Reading and writing for meaning are paramount
- Writing and reading are inseparable processes
- Literacy learning must be worthwhile
- Children learn to read and write by reading and writing a wide variety of texts
- Reading and writing are powerful tools for learning
- The best approach to teaching reading and writing is a combination of approaches
- Careful assessment of student's literacy learning is integral to sound teaching
- Reading and writing flourish in a supportive environment.
  (from Reading for Life: New Zealand Ministry of Education)

We are in our second year of implementation. Over the course of the school year, teachers attended nine training sessions. The scope of this training includes:

1. Theory into practice
2. Brian Cambourne's "Conditions of Learning"
3. Community of the classroom
4. Effective instruction, curriculum planning and assessment of the learner and learning
   - To/With/By (M. Mooney)
   - Lesson Design
   - Levels of Quality
   - 3 Cs: Complete, Correct, Comprehensive (S Kovalik)
   - 1-6 Scoring (Oregon State Dept. of Education)
5. Teaching to specific essential learnings (Washington standards and benchmarks)
6. Literacy within the discipline
   a. "reading to learn" (content area)
   b. shared and guided reading
      - reciprocal teaching
      - literature stud


LITERACY PROGRAM
Literacy for Enjoyment
Literacy to Learn
Literacy to Do
Literature
recreative
expressive
aesthetic
e.g.
stories
songs
poems
plays
Information
factual
e.g.
texts
letters
journals
Function/Procedure
factual
e.g
manuals
receipts
instructions
maps
THE APPROACHES
With
To
By
read aloud
memos
notes
instructions
shared reading
guided reading
interactive writing
conferring
writer's workshop
independent reading
independent writing

Kathy Porterfield, Teresa Reep
For the Evergreen School District

Scoring Scale

Exemplary Writing at this level is both exceptional and memorable. It is often characterized by distinctive and unusually sophisticated problem-solving approaches. 6

Strong Writing at this level exceeds the standard. It is thorough, complex, and consistently portrays exceptional control of content and skills. 5

Proficient Writing at this level meets the standard. It is strong, solid work that has many more strengths than weaknesses. The writing demonstrates mastery of skills and reflects considerable care and commitment. 4

3 **Developing** Writing at this level shows basic, but inconsistent mastery and application of content and skills. It shows some strengths but tends to have more weaknesses overall.

2 **Emerging** Writing at this level is often superficial, fragmented, or incomplete. It may show a partial mastery of content and skills, but it needs considerable development before reflecting the proficient level of performance.

1 **Beginning** Writing at this level is minimal. It typically portrays a lack of understanding and use of appropriate skills and strategies. Writing at this level may contain major errors.

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*3 C's of Assessment

*Complete--work meets all requirements of the inquiry including timeliness. Task is complete from beginning to end, and done on time.

*Correct--work called for by inquiry contained accurate information and was completed according to requirements.

*Comprehensive--work reflects thought and investigation. What is important was researched thoroughly, thought about and not just copied from a book.

LESSON DESIGN MODEL

Goal:
What you want your students to learn

Criteria:
Quality expectations

Procedure:
Steps to complete or needed to perform the task

Reflection:
Thinking about the experience as a learner

Evaluation:
Assessing understanding or performance against a standard
Assessing effort

LESSON DESIGN

Goal:

Criteria:

Procedure:

Reflection:

Evaluation:

GUIDED READING PLANNING SHEET

Group members:____

Level: Emergent Developing Fluent Proficient

Outcomes:

Text Title:

Text supports/challenges:

Lesson: (Procedure)

Response:

Extensions:

Assessment: (Reflection & Evaluation)

Kathy Porterfield and Mari Donohue
For the Evergreen School District

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Selected Response Assessment:

The student is asked a series of questions with a choice of alternative responses.

Examples:

- Multiple Choice
- Matching Exercises
- True/False items
- Short answer fill-in the blank

Essay Assessment:

The student is asked to prepare an extended written answer.

Examples:

Answer a question with an explanation of the solution.

Students might be asked to make comparison, interpret information, to solve open-ended math problems by showing all of their work and sharing their thinking.

Performance Assessment:

The student carries out a specified activity. The performance is observed and is judged by the quality of the achievement demonstrated. Either the process, while skills are being demonstrated is observed, or the evaluation of the product created is observed.

Examples:

- Musical Performance
- Speaking a second language
- Reading Aloud
- Physical Activity (PE)

Personal Communication as Assessment:

Talking to students.and questioning them. The teacher listens to responses and decides if they are right or wrong or evaluates the response based on some criteria for quality.

Examples:

- Interview
- Conferences
- Class discussions

READING OUTCOMES

Assessment	
PA	USES BALANCE OF CUE SYSTEM .
PC, PA, SR, E	PREDICTS
PC, SR	WORD MEANING: CLARIFIES meanings of words through context word parts (pre-fix, suffix, root/base word, compound words) multiple meanings of words (synonym, antonym, homonym) ideas
PC, E	SUMMARIZES
PC, PA	QUESTIONS: INQUIRY
PC	PRINT FEATURES (bold, italics, captions, sub-topics)
PC	LAYOUT AND TEXT STRUCTURE
PC, PA, SR, E	LITERAL COMPREHENSION: READING THE LINES sequenced retell main idea, facts supporting ideas summarizing
PC, PA, SR, E	INFERENTIAL COMPREHENSION: BETWEEN THE LINES cause and effect draws conclusions conceptual understandings
PC, PA, SR, E	EVALUATIVE COMPREHENSION: BEYOND THE LINES relates to personal experiences compares/contrasts author's point of view/purpose fact and opinion
PC	FLUENCY, ADJUSTS RATE

KEY:
PC = personal communication (i.e. teacher observation
PA = performance assessment (i.e. reading aloud, writing assessment)
SR = selected response (i.e.multiple choice, true false)
E = essay

*Developed by: K. Curtis, S. Davidson,
M. Donohue, K. Kuehlwein, K. Porterfield,
C. Ward for the Evergreen School District*

PC, SR	LOCATES INFORMATION table of contents index glossary illustrations tables charts diagrams graphs
PC, SR	USES REFERENCE MATERIALS dictionary encyclopedia maps globe atlas card catalogue
PC	CHOOSING A BOOK 5 finger rule interest book sharing
PC	READS FOR ENJOYMENT
PC	REFERS TO TEXT TO VERIFY AND CLARIFY IDEAS
PC, PA, SR, E	IDENTIFIES ELEMENTS OF LITERATURE character (round, flat, protagonist, antagonist, development, stereotype) setting plot foreshadowing tension climax theme author's purpose point of view style (imagery, figurative language) mood
PC, E	DISCUSSES BOOKS USING NOTICE, WONDER, FEEL TERMS
PC, SR	IDENTIFIES LITERARY DEVICES AND ELEMENTS (figurative language) simile metaphore alliteration personification imagery dialect/vernacular (ex. slang) symbol onomatopoeia

KEY:
PC = personal communication (i.e. teacher observation)
PA = performance assessment (i.e. reading aloud, writing assessment)
SR = selected response (i.e. multiple choice, true false)
E = essay

Name ______________________________

PICTOGRAPH

A pictograph is a form of bar graph that uses pictures to represent data

GOAL:

- To create a level four project
- To work on producing QUALITY work
- To work on data collection
- To create another form of bar graph

PROCEDURE:

- Choose a topic
- Collect raw data
- Plan your graph - pictures, etc.
- Create a rough draft
- Create a final copy

Please score each item with a
CRITERIA
_____Level 4
_____No larger than 8 1/2 by 11 unless checked with teacher
_____Include your rough draft
_____Include raw data sheet
_____Include this scoring guide
_____Paper clip all work together
_____Name and date
_____Title
_____All data indicated by pictures only
_____Label individual subjects
_____Include a key

Please score this project 1-6
_____PRESENTATION
_____GRADE AGAINST THE STANDARD
_____EFFORT

Name________________________________

SNOWPEOPLE

GOAL:

- To create a level four project
- To work on producing QUALITY work
- To work on data collection

Please score each item with a

CRITERIA

______Level 4

______No larger than 8 1/2 b6 11 unless checked with teacher

______Include your diagram or model

______Use at least three colors

______Include this scoring guide

______Parent signature

______Name on your project somewhere

______List the approximate time you spent on this project

______Light enough to hang on the wall

____

Signature

My child spent ______ hours on the quality project

PROCEDURE:

- Plan a way to create a snow person
- If you are using a medium other than paper, YOU MUST PRESENT YOU PLAN TO THE TEACHER
- If you are going for the Third C YOU MUST PRESENT YOU PLAN TO THE TEACHER
- Create a diagram or a model
- Create a final project

Please score this project 1-6

______PRESENTATION

______GRADE AGAINST THE STANDARD

______EFFORT

Successful School Share

Kathy Baldwin and Joan McGrath
Lower Kuskokwim School District, Alaska

Assuring Competency in Reading
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Lower
Kuskokwim
School
District

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fax: 907-543-4924
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Literacy
In The
Lower Kuskokwim School District

- State Standards
- District Language Arts Philosophy and Rationale
- Bilingual Education
- Program Components
    - -Yup'ik First Language/ Options
    - -Balanced Literacy Program K-12
    - -Secondary English Language Development
- LKSD Core Content Standards/Phases
- Assessment
    - -District-wide Assessments
    - -Statewide Assessments
- Parent Workshops
- Itinerant Literacy Leaders
- Staff Development

Presented by
Kathy Baldwin
And
Joan McGrath

Feb. 25,1999

English/Language Arts Content Standards for Alaska Students

A A student should be able to speak and write well for a variety of purposes and audiences.

B A student should be a competent and thoughtful reader, listener, and viewer of literature, technical materials, and variety of other information.

C A student should be able to identify and select from multiple strategies in order to complete projects independently and cooperatively.

D A student should be able to think logically and reflectively in order to present and explain positions based on relevant and reliable information.

E A student should understand and respect the perspectives of the others in order to communicate effectively.

LKSD Language Arts Philosophy and Rationale

The Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) believes that language is basic to learning. Language, the integration of reading, writing, listening and speaking, should not be taught as a set of fragmented, isolated skills, but rather as interrelated components, with development in each of the four areas occurring simultaneously.

In the LKSD, Yup'ik Eskimo and English are the primary languages. The language arts curriculum should reflect this reality, and assume the responsibility for fostering first language literacy of students, whether it is in English or Yup'ik. LKSD believes that students are empowered through continual growth and development of their language abilities in both their first and second languages.

The District recognizes that students progress at their individual ability levels as they work toward the attainment of recognized outcomes, and that students are individuals, whose growth and development with language (reading/writing/speaking/listening) occurs at different stages and at different rates of speed. It also recognizes that students throughout the district enter schools with varying backgrounds of knowledge that affect learning, program implementation, and teaching strategies.

In order for students to have as many educational and occupational options as possible in today's world, it is important that they be able to express themselves orally and in writing using both Yup'ik/Cup'ig and English. Knowledge and acquisition of both languages will allow students the option for success in either village or mainstream life.

In essence, ALL teachers and ALL programs should assist students in the development of their language ability so they are able to enjoy positive feelings of self-esteem and confidence, achieve academic success, and attain career goals.

YFL	2 way Immersion	1 way Immersion	ESL/ELD YSL
•Yup'ik Speakers	•Yup'ik & English Speakers	•English speakers	•Limited English Speakers K-12
•K-3 Yup'ik Rdg. Wrtg. Math Upingaurluta Yuuraraq	•K-3 Yup'ik Rdg. Wrtg. Math Upingaurluta Yuuraraq	•K-3 80-100% Yup'ik Instruction Upingaurluta Yuuraraq	•K-12 English Instruction using ESL/ELD methods & courses
•ESL/ELD K-12	•ESL/ELD K-12	ESL/ELD K-12	
•Transition Grade 3	•Transition Grade 3	•Transition Grade 3	•Transition Grade 3
•4-12 English	•4-12 English	•4th 50%-50% 5th/6th 60%-40% 7th-12th 50" L/C or YO	•K-12 Yup'ik as Secon Language 40"-50"

A Well Balanced Literacy Program

- * Reading Aloud
- * Shared Reading
- * Guided Reading
- * Independent Reading
- * Language opportunities to respond critically and thoughtfully
- * Shared Writing
- * Interactive Writing
- * Guided Writing or Writing Workshop
- * Independent Writing

Overview of Components of ELD I-IV

Content Standard A: The student will speak and write well for a variety of audiences and purposes.
Content Standard B: The student should be a competent and thoughtful reader, listener, and viewer of literature, technical materials and a variety of other information.

ELD I

Vocabulary Development
1000 new words drawn from Curriculum Guide and student reading

Grammar and Sentence Structure
LADO workbook 1
Verb List

Word Attack Skills
See Outcomes and Word Attack sections of Curriculum Guide

Reading
Independent reading
Listening

Peer Tutoring
Teaching word attack skills to children

ELD II

Vocabulary Development
1000 new words drawn from Curriculum Guide and student reading

Grammar and Sentence Structure
LADO workbook 2
Verb List

Word Attack Skills
See Outcomes and Word Attack sections of Curriculum Guide

Understanding Language
See Curriculum Guide

Research Skills
Alphabetical Order
Using the Dictionary

Peer Tutoring
Teaching word attack skills to children

ELD III

Vocabulary Development
600 new words drawn from Curriculum Guide and student reading

Grammar and Sentence Structure
LADO workbooks 3 & 4
Verb List

Word Attack Skills
See Outcomes and Word Attack sections of Curriculum Guide

Understanding Language
See Curriculum Guide

Research Skills
Using the Dictionary

Reading
Strategies, Comprehension, Independent Reading, Understanding Literature

Reading to Children
(Where no children are available, students may read to younger students)

ELD IV

Vocabulary Development
600 new words drawn from Curriculum Guide and student reading

Grammar and Sentence Structure
LADO workbooks 5 & 6
Verb List
Word Attack Skills
See Outcomes and Word Attack sections of Curriculum Guide

Understanding Language
See Curriculum Guide

Research Skills
Researching in a Variety of Media

Reading
Strategies, Comprehension, Independent Reading, Understanding Literature

Reading to Children
(Where no children are available, students may read to younger students)

If the teacher determines that students in ELD II-IV have not mastered some of the components of lower-level ELD classes, those components should be included in instruction in the upper-level ELD classes.

Teacher: ______________________________

School: ______________________________

Student Name: ______________________________

English II: Requirements for Course Completion

8 Published Writing Pieces (Standards A, B, D)

Date: Title: Place Publ.: Mode: Total Score:	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.

Four Speeches (Standards A, B, D)
(One must be oral presentation with visual aids).

Date: Title: Place Deliv: Mode: Total Score: Oral Pres.?:	1.	2.	3.	4.

Daily Oral Language Quarterly Tests (Standards A, B)

Date: Score:	Date: Score:
Date: Score:	Date: Score:

Literature Tests/Projects Average Grades
(Standards B, C, D, E)

Short stories: Average: Date:	Nonfiction: Average: Date:
Novel/Poetry: Average: Date:	Drama/persuasion: Average: Date:

Portfolio (Standards A, B, C, D)

Date: Scores:	

Reading Requirement (Standards B, E)
Number of works read each quarter=10 total

Dates: Number:				

Research Paper:
(Standards A, B, C, D)

Title:	
Date:	
Score:	

Word Study/Vocabulary Semester Scores (Standards A, B)

Dates: Scores:		

Viewing/ListeningQuarterly Assessment
(Standard B)

Dates: Scores:				

First Steps *Writing Continuum Phase*	*First Steps* *Reading Continuum Phase*	*First Steps* *Oral LanguageContinuum*	*Degree of Reading Power Level:*

Fall '98

Entrance Criteria for ELD I-IV

Where there is a discrepancy between scores, use the lower score to determine placement.

ELD I

Students in grades 9-12 who score:

- 34 or below on the DRP (independent level)
- 350 or below on the TOEFL or preTOEFL
- 49 or below on the CELT (students exiting 8th grade)

ELD II

Students in grades 9-12 who score:

- 35-44 on the DRP (independent level)
- 351-400 on the TOEFL/preTOEFL
- 50-59 on the CELT (students exiting 8th grade)

Note: ELD I and II may be taught together. The number of students in ELD I is very small at most sites. If these students have IEPs, this would be an appropriate class to be taught by the SPED teacher.

ELD III

Students in grades 9-12 who score:

- 45-50 on the DRP (independent level)
- 401-450 on the TOEFL/preTOEFL
- 60-69 on the CELT (students exiting 8th grade)

ELD IV

Students in grade 9 (exiting grade 8)who score:

- 51-60 on the DRP (independent level)
- 70-80 on the CELT

Students in grade 10-11 (or repeating grade 9) who score:

- 51-65 on the DRP (independent level)
- 451-499 on the TOEFL/preTOEFL

Students in grade 12 (or exiting grade 11) who score:

- 51-70 on the DRP (independent level)
- 451-525 on the TOEFL/preTOEFL

Note: ELD III and IV may be taught together.

Students placing out of ELD IV

Students who place out of ELD IV at a site where most students are in ELD classes should **not** be included in ELD IV. These students may be placed in other electives, satellite classes, or gifted/talented programs.

6

For more information:
Richard Smiley, Ph.D.
Administrator, Standards and Assessment
Alaska Department of Education
801 West Tenth Street, Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1894
(907) 465-8691
richard_smiley@educ.state.ak.us

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Alaska
Department of
Education

March 1998

"Supporting a community of learners where children and families come first."

The Alaska High School
Graduation Qualifying Examination
Some Frequently Asked Questions

Alaska Department of Education
801 W. 10th Street, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801-1894

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The Alaska
High School Graduation
Qualifying Examination

Some Frequently Asked Questions

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The Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Examination

Some Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination?
In 1997, the Alaska Legislature enacted a law that requires all Alaska high school students to pass an examination in reading, writing, and mathematics before they can receive a high school diploma. Students must pass the High School Qualifying Examination, in addition to completing all course requirements, to earn a high school diploma. Students who do not pass the examination will receive a certificate of attendance.

2. When do students have to start taking the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination?
Beginning with the graduating class of 2002, all students must pass the High School Qualifying Examination. The freshman class of 1998-99 will be the first class required to pass the examination before their high schools can award them a diploma.

3. What will be measured on the examination?
The High School Qualifying Examination will consist of three tests: reading, writing and mathematics. The test questions will be based on the Alaska Student Performance Standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

4. Who is going to develop the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination?
The Alaska Department of Education will contract with a highly qualified commercial test publisher to develop the examination and test questions.

5. How will Alaskans know whether the examination is appropriate for our state?
During the development of the examination, the State Board of Education will appoint several committees of Alaskans to oversee the work of the test publisher that will be contracted to develop the test. The committees will make sure the examinations are fair for all students in Alaska and that they measure the things that Alaskans expect their young people to know by the time they graduate from high school. The committees will also look at such issues as test bias.

6. When will the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination be administered?
The examination will be administered twice each school year, once in the fall and once in the spring.

7. When can students first take the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination?
Students can take the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination for the first time in the spring of the 10th grade.

8. How long will students spend taking the examination?
A time limit will not be set for finishing the examination. Students will have as long as they need to complete it. However, most students can expect to spend about two to three hours to complete each of the three tests.

9. How will students find out about their examination results?
The Alaska Department of Education will coordinate the administration, scoring and reporting of the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination. Following the administration and scoring of the examinations, the department will send individual results to students, their parents, and to the schools and school districts. The reports will show the parts of the examination each student passed and failed. The reports also will show when the next examination will be given.

10. What happens if a student fails the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination?
Students can retake the parts of the examination they do not pass the first time. They can retake parts of the examination as many times as necessary to pass for up to three years after they have left high school.

11. How will students be helped if they fail a portion of the examination?
High schools across the state will develop courses and alternate instructional programs for students who fail a portion of the examination. The courses will be designed to make sure students learn the essential knowledge measured on the examination.

12. Will special accommodations be made for special education or limited English speaking students?
Yes.

13. Will there be any financial cost to parents or students for taking the examination?
No.

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Lower
Kuskokwim
School
District

Attention Parents, Guardians,and Students of the Lower Kuskokwim School District

Changes in high school curriculum:

Student academic success is the primary focus of the Lower Kuskokwim School district. The Quality Schools Initiative voted into law with SB 36 requires districts in the State of Alaska to develop and maintain high academic standards for ALL students. Content and performance standards, developed at the state level by teachers throughout the state, currently provide the foundation for all school instruction.

Benchmark testing by the state in math, reading and writing/language arts will occur at grades 3, 6, and 8 in the next two years to determine student and district progress. The High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE), which all students in Alaska must pass in order to qualify for a diploma, goes into effect with next years 10th grades.

Positive changes have occurred and will continue to occur in the LKSD. The current top priority of the district is the improvement of student reading performance. Without strong reading skills, students have difficulty achieving in the work world and in college, and many students at the high school levels need increased opportunities to obtain these skills.

So what's LKSD doing about this?

- LKSD has developed secondary reading classes to help high school students become stronger readers and writers, with good language skills. ELD One through Four (English Language Development) have been developed to assist students in improving reading, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and writing skills. Many students will be placed in one of these classes based on scores from two assessment instruments.

Why reading and language arts skills?

- These classes will not replace English One through Four, which are required for graduation. They will support the regular English classes, and provide students with increased opportunities for improvement.
- The LKSD is serious on its attempt to REALLY work with students in becoming prepared for life beyond high school. Reading and language skills are the keys to success, regardless of work responsibilities.
- The LKSD wants students to be well prepared to pass the HSGQE so they can earn their diplomas, as well as receive the credits necessary to graduate.

How can school and families work together?

- We will appreciates your support of these ELD classes for your high school children. Please feel free to call the district with questions and concerns.
- We encourage you to make reading a focus in your home. Have books, magazines and newspapers in your home for all your children, and encourage them to use their libraries.
- Encourage your children to be involved in any reading incentive programs offered through the schools.

For further information call: Bill Ferguson, Superintendent (543-4912); Les Daenzer, Director of Instructional Programs (543-4858); Bev Williams, Curriculum/Bilingual Department Coordinator (543-4850); Kathy Gross; Language Arts Curriculum Specialist (543-4875).

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Lower Kuskokwim School District

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Angayuqaten Ikayuutait

Atmautluak Community Parent Conference

November 5, 1998
3:00 to 7:00 PM

Sponsored by
Title I - Migrant Ed

AOTE Members
Moses Pavilla & Melvin Egoak

Angayuqat Ikayuutait

Welcoming
…… Betsy Jenkins
Kathy Baldwin

The Importance of the Yup'ik Language at Home
…… Betsy Jenkins

Language Development Through Songs/Chants/Rhymes
…… Pauline Small
Olinka Cronberg

Reading Expectations and Transition Grades for Yup'ik Language Programs
…… Pauline Small
Kathy Baldwin
Pam Yancy

Visual Memory
- A. Match the Pattern
- B. What's Missing?
- C. Sticker Sequence Cards
- D. Card Games

…… Pam Yancey
Kathy Baldwin

Parent Conference

Fine Motor Skills
- A. Tracing Practice
- B. Cutting Practice
- C. Penny Race
- D. String Game

…… Pam Yancey
Kathy Baldwin

Dinner/Entertainment
……

Reading Aloud
…… Kathy Baldwin
Pauline Small

The Flame Parent Library
…… Lenora Arnold
Richard Pavilla

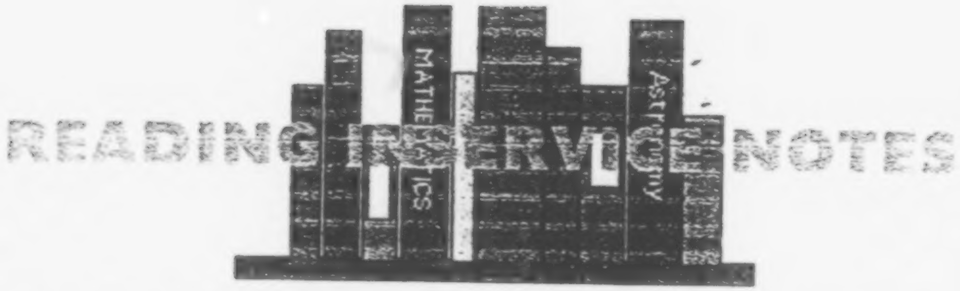
Alphabet Letter Recognition
…… Pam Yancey
Pauline Small

Closure
…… Lenora Arnold

Toppenish High School Reading Program

Nancy Brulotte and Jenae O'Hara
Toppenish High School
Toppenish, Washington

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington



Creating Extended Response Skills and Knowledge

Ocober 7, 1998 — Dr. Lesley Thompson, NWREL

INITIAL RESPONSE to the inservice has been very positive. Many have said they enjoyed the "hands on" approach. Others have mentioned the fact they have never thought about designing questions this way or teaching the "how to's" to students re. answering extended response questions in this manner. All that have come to us made positive comments on the usefulness of the handouts.

REMINDER: Reading Committee members are available to help you design your extended response questions. Please contact any of them for assistance. It will be good practice for each of us as well!

AS A HELPFUL RESOURCE . . .

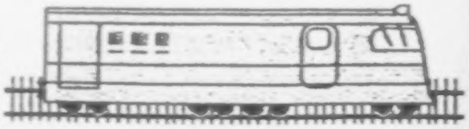
General scoring criteria for extended-response reading items

4 points—Student's response provides extensive evidence of the essential interpretation or critical analysis of text required by the prompt.
3 points—Student's response provides evidence that the student has made the essential interpretation or critical analysis of text required by the prompt.
2 points—Student's response provides incomplete evidence of the interpretations or critical analysis of text required by the prompt.
1 point—Student's response provides little evidence of the interpretation or critical analysis of text as required by the prompt.
0 points—Student's provides no evidence of the interpretation or critical analysis of text required by the prompt; or the prompt may simply be recopied; or the response may be "I don't know" or a question mark (?).

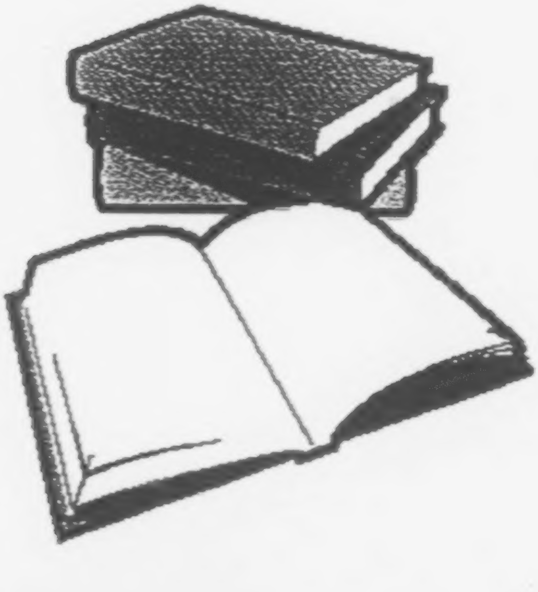
Assignment: Assign each of your students in one class only an extended response question to an essay or textbook section. Score each of the writing samples using the 4-point Washington rubric (see box above). Report your scores to Tim. Ninth grade teachers collect your samples and give them to Tim.
Addendum: Content area teachers turn in one (1) example of a 4-3-2-1-0 (if any) extended response answer to Tim. These will be organized into an "anchor" portfolio of student responses which will be copied and distributed.No names will be shown on these chosen anchor responses in portfolio.

For your students to help determine their response to your question:
1) What is the definition of the "prompt" term? (page 3-6 of handout)
2) What are the key terms I need to pay attention to in the prompt?
3) What are my "boundaries" I can't go beyond in my response?

GET ON THE READING TRAIN



TOPPENISH
HIGH SCHOOL
READING
IMPROVEMENT
PLAN
1998-1999



TOPPENISH HIGH SCHOOL READING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Demographic Information

Toppenish High School has 748 students in grades 9-12. Our ethnicity is very diverse: 68.3% Hispanic, 0.1%Black, 18.2% Indian, 12.4% White, 0.5% Asian and 0.4% mixed. Fifty-four point one per cent of our student population is male, and 45.9% is female. Ninety-three per cent of our students are eligible for free and reduced lunches; 75.9% have filed applications for free and reduced lunch. Twenty-seven per cent of our student population is migrant. On average, these students spend 5 months a year in our school. Twenty-five per cent of our students have limited or no prior formal school experience. Forty-five per cent of our student population is bilingual-eligible. Fifty per cent of the adult population in Toppenish have not graduated from high school. Seventy-seven percent of our fourth year students meet the academic criteria of senior classification; thus, some of our seniors take five or six years to meet high school graduation requirements.

Reading Achievement

Data:

All 240 of our incoming ninth graders were tested with the CTBS and STAR Reading assessments in the spring of 1998. STAR scores indicated that 87% of our ninth graders have below grade level reading abilities. The students in our four reading classes are assessed five times per term using various assessment tools including STAR, Gates-MacGinitie, and SRA. This monitoring enables the teacher to reteach and adjust curriculum.

Student Strengths and Weaknesses:

Results of the data from the research conducted by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories (NWREL) "clearly show that there are major challenges for staff to address which will enable the ninth-graders to increase their reading proficiency skills. Decision to reform which positively influences teaching and learning, should be driven by the results of the data" (p.11). A clear focus to achieve this end is highly desired by the faculty and staff at THS. Recognizing the immensity of this task, all content area instructors must take direct responsibility for reading instruction. Therefore, every teacher at our school is a reading teacher. The data revealed that we have very few strengths in the Reading Essential Learnings and multiple weaknesses to be addressed and conquered.

Patterns:

The results presented by NWREL show that the average highest achievement CTBS test scores in math, language, and reading are gained by those students who pay a full lunch, are white, and are neither migrant eligible nor bilingual eligible. The lowest average CTBS test scores in math, language, and reading are shown by those students who receive free lunch, are Hispanic, are migrant eligible, and are bilingual eligible. The only new pattern that emerged from the reading assessments is that most ninth grade students have not acquired the necessary reading skills to meet the essential learnings. This is demonstrated by the fact that no group, regardless of ethnicity, language, or socioeconomic background, achieved the national percentile norm of 50 on the CTBS.

Staff Development

In the spring of 1998, our site council gathered input from the entire faculty and staff to select a major focus for improvement of student achievement for the 1998-99 school year. The faculty and staff selected reading improvement as its top priority. Since there was limited expertise within our faculty in teaching reading, the Student Learning Improvement Committee decided to provide six inservice trainings on teaching reading in the content areas which will be aligned with the Essential Academic Learnings. Each training includes a hands-on application assignment to ensure accountability by each individual staff member.

Parent Involvement

•Through the Family Literacy Program, parents are provided the opportunity to experience learning in the same environment as their children. We believe that by so doing the parents will begin to acquire a connection and an ownership with the school and will become stakeholders in their children's education.

•Student led conferences, as well as teacher-family potlucks, have provided a non-threatening atmosphere for parents whose culture places a high value on family. This atmosphere is conducive to sharing information about the Essential Learnings and school goals in an intimate manner.

•We have addressed the Reading Essential Learnings and our goals to improve reading deficiencies in the local newspapers, through the Parent Advisory Committee, in the District Newsletter, and through parent conferencing. All communications about the Reading Essential Learnings are available in Spanish for limited English speakers.

•We believe our parents have not completely grasped the magnitude of their child's reading problem as it relates to the WASL. We have kept in mind that passing the WASL indicates the student's ability to succeed in his/her lifelong career. We are continually looking for new strategies for increasing parental awareness and involvement. For example, we ask members of our community to volunteer as reading mentors and ask every parent to daily monitor student reading at home.

Current Plans

This 1998-99 school year we have created four freshman reading courses with an experimental curriculum that originated through the English department, consultants from NWREL, faculty and administration who have worked extensively with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements. We plan to add more freshman reading courses in the future to address student needs. We will develop reasearch-based high school reading curriculum for this course, incorporating continual observation and implementation. The freshman reading course will be a required 1-credit course for those freshmen scoring at pre-primer through 5th grade reading levels in addition to the already required 1-credit freshman English course. Exit criteria including formal assessment will be necessary before a student can enroll in English 9. Many of our teachers have incorporated Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) in their classes; some also have required an additional reading list for their subject area as a means to encourage reading and thus develop reading abilities. Parents and students have served as tutors for individuals who need practice in reading. Our media specialist has increased resources (reading level 3-7) in the library to further student skill building. These additional library resources also help the student that has limited reading resources at home.

2. ALIGNMENT OF ESSENTIAL LEARNINGS, CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Staff's Knowledge of Goal:

The core reading staff and Language Arts Department are very familiar with the Reading Essential Learnings; however, we know that non-language arts content area teachers aren't as familiar with the reading goals and may not be using different instructional methods and strategies to teach reading in the content area. It is our goal to ensure that all content area teachers also become reading teachers. Staff development in the area of reading instruction through the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory will be the focus of the 1998-99 school year.

Reading Program Alignment to the Essential Learnings:

Previously we had no reading program at the high school level. The Essential Learnings have provided us with a framework to develop and implement a reading program based on information and strategies from current research with clear targets and a means to assess those targets. These targets will be refined and better defined as the reading frameworks for benchmark 3 are developed.

The body of research dealing with effective reading programs and student populations similar to Toppenish High School is extremely limited. Therefore, the challenges we are attempting to address are unique, and we have not found a proven, research-based program that meets the specific needs of our students.

Reading Program Alignment with Research Findings:

Research compiled from our Goals 2000 Secondary Content Area Reading training and the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (see Evaluation of Toppenish 1997-98 Ninth-grade Reading Academic Achievement Scores) has been used to assist us in curriculum alignment. Our Reading Committee study group meets on a weekly basis to share and discuss current reading research findings.

The biggest gap is in developing strategies to help the low achieving or low performing student break the cycle of failure and become a motivated reader. This type of student often has difficulty setting goals and evaluating progress because reading is not a priority. Other gaps in our reading program are addressing the needs of our English Language Learners (ELL also known as LEP), as well as finding research that provides specific reading strategies for non-language arts reading teachers, and strategies for teaching remedial reading to high school age students. We currently do not have a systematic approach to provide enough accelerated instruction in reading to meet the needs of ELL and remedial reading students to equip them with the skills necessary to be successful in content area classes.

Addressing a Full Range of Learners:

We are attempting to meet the varied needs of high school learners with skill levels ranging from academically challenged students to academically gifted students. We also have students who are immigrants with little or no educational experience and students whose education is interrupted due to migrancy. To meet their diverse language development needs, we offer courses ranging from our mainstream language arts courses to our English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Languages (ESOL), remedial reading, and advanced placement programs.

3. Goals and Objectives of the Plan

Vision Statement

We at Toppenish High School will strive to reach our fullest potential as readers and as teachers of reading in an environment of support, responsibility, accountability and encouragement.

Mission Statement

We will challenge all learners by the conditions and resources necessary to master the knowledge, skills and behaviors essential for becoming a competent lifelong reader.

Goal 1: All staff, students and parents will become readers and teachers of reading.

Objective 1: Toppenish High School will implement a comprehensive reading program that will provide extensive staff development opportunities, meet the needs of a diverse student population and involve parents in literacy activities.

Goal 2: Curriculum, instruction, assessment, and staff development will be designed with the Reading Essential Learnings as the primary focus.

Objective 2: All teachers will incorporate the use of research-based reading strategy instruction in their classroom.

Goal 3: We will increase the percentage of students meeting the 10th grade Reading Standard.

Based on the 7th grade Spring, 1998, WASL reading data, 17.7% students met the reading standard. Through investigating and implementing reading strategies that are successful, a minimum of 3% increase over the number of students passing the reading section of WASL at the 10th grade level is our goal. Without a 10th grade baseline data we are unable at this time to set reading accountability goals, but by reviewing the spring, 1998, 7th grade reading WASL scores, our goal is to increase the number of students meeting the 10th grade standard by 3%. This translates into a total of 20% of the sophomores assessed meeting or exceeding the 10th grade WASL reading standard. When baseline data is established for the 10th grade WASL in the spring of 1999 for Toppenish High School 10th grade students, accountability goals will be established using the Washington State formula.

Objective 3: A total of 20% of the sophomores will pass the Reading Essential Learnings on the1999 Benchmark 3 assessment.

4. Action Steps

We will achieve the above goals by taking the following steps:

A. Continue to develop and provide reading classes with the goal of bringing student reading abilities up to grade level.

B. Partner with NWREL in an effort to increase our ability to teach reading in the content areas, using effective research based strategies.

C. Maintain ESOL classes in a four-level program for ELL students that will raise student English language skills from pre-literacy levels to a level at which they can be successful in mainstream courses.

D. Adopt a school-wide SSR program in which all students, teachers and staff read each day for a designated period of time.

E. Train and utilize parent tutors for in-class and after school academic activities.

F. Continue to offer and expand Family Literacy classes at Toppenish High School, including basic literacy, ESOL components.

G. Maintain a home reading requirement of at least two hours each week which will be verified by language arts teachers and parents.

H. Increase library resources and access to those resources.

I. Participate in district-wide reading curriculum adoption.

J. Expand Staff Reading Committee activities, focusing on developing, meeting and revising reading improvement goals.

K. Continue to provide ESOL inservice training leading to an ESL endorsement to sensitize staff to unique needs of our ELLs.

L. Maintain Senior Projects as a performance-based assessment showcasing student learning.

M. Continue to participate in the Goals 2000 Secondary Content Area Reading Cadre.

N. Utilize high school career portfolios to organize student educational focus.

O. Participate in the Washington Reading Core Grant tutor training.

P. Increase reading abilities through cross-age and peer-to-peer tutoring.

Q. Continue to hold family/staff potlucks promoting reading.

R. Expand participation in Share 105 activities to increase the technical literacy of our students and teachers.

S. Capitalize on the parent involvement benefits of student-led conferences.

T. Continue to offer integrated Language Arts/History classes and additional integrated courses.

U. Capitalize on the instructional benefits of the four-period day schedule.

V. Continue to provide intersession - a periodically modified schedule which gives students the opportunity to improve grades, receive individualized attention and enrichment, and retrieve credit.

W. Expand the use of performance based assessments to assess student growth and to evaluate and improve curriculum and instruction.

X. Continue to improve our use of cooperative learning teaching methods to foster the development of higher order thinking skills.

Y. Continue to offer advanced placement classes to provide challenging learning opportunities for our academically advanced students.

Z. Provide additional inservice training for content area teachers to assist them in aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment with Reading Essential Learnings.

AA. Maintain and expand the use of Duxbury and Taylor curriculum framework websites.

BB. Monitor, evaluate and improve student progress and program effectiveness using STAR/Gates/SRA assessments.

CC. Develop a parent-resource kit to assist in increasing literacy in the home, including a component for parents with limited reading abilities.

DD. Develop a Newcomers' kit that assists students, especially those from other countries, in becoming successful in school.

EE. Model content area assessment after the WASL by developing extended response rubrics.

FF. Collaborate with the Districtwide Reading Committee.

5. Evaluation

A. Gates/STAR/ITBS/LAS Reading and Writing/SABE pre- and post-testing assessments will be used to monitor and evaluate student reading abilities, as well as program effectiveness.

B. Implementation of the program will be evidenced by lesson plans for all teachers linked to the Essential Learnings for reading instruction.

C. We will increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard on the reading portion of the WASL. Upon the receipt of Benchmark 3 frameworks we will be able to evaluate the curriculum alignment to the reading essential learnings. This will afford students a better opportunity to meet the state reading requirements. Congruence of the reading program will be evidenced by the use of research-based reading strategy instruction in the classroom. A library of professional journals, study groups, peer coaching, and peer observations organized by the reading committee will assist in the implementation of our reading instruction.

D. There will be an increase in parent involvement, as evidenced by a number of parents participating in family literacy classes, family reading potlucks, parent/teacher conferences, parent-inclusive inservice training, parent involvement in the form of mentor tutors in the classrooms, parent advisory counsel, and increase in home reading as evidenced by student reading logs and self-reports.

5. Summary

The extremely low reading proficiency of our students at Toppenish High School has prompted our staff to focus on reading across the content areas. Therefore, every teacher is a reading teacher. Staff development emphasis and funding have been directed towards improving student reading. With the establishment of a baseline in the spring of 1999, our program will be reviewed and adjustments will be made which will continue our growth as a staff with the sole purpose of making our students better readers.

Reading Committee:
Nancy Brulotte
Leo Galaviz
Leonor Maldonado
Jeané O'Hara
Rudy Ramos
Tim Davison, Chair
Steve Myers, Principal
John Cerna, Assistant Principal
Selena Escamilla
John Magas
Erin Moore
Jeanette Ozuna
Tony Rodríguez

Phone: (509) 865-3370

TOPPENISH HIGH SCHOOL
School District #202
141 Ward Road
Toppenish, Washington 98948
(509) 865-3370
(509) 865-3244 FAX

Principal
Steve Myers
Assistant Principal
John Cerna

October 25, 1998

Dear Parent:

Your child, ________________, is enrolled in English 9A, a reading class offered the first term and continues with English 9 second term. The class was created this year to meet the needs of students with a 6th grade reading level and lower. The 8th grade CTBS testing and STAR reading test scores were used to determine reading level.

Reading is "the" most important skill necessary for school success. Without good reading comprehension skills students have great difficulty keeping up in all their subjects because they cannot read the textbooks.

In class the emphasis will be on reading for information as well as for pleasure. Students will practice reading orally as well as silently.

Research shows that if students are not reading at home, their speed and comprehension skills improve much slower than if they are. To succeed in school (and in most jobs) students must be able to read to understand at least basic information. In an effort to ensure that your child improve his/her reading skills, we are asking that you help by signing the home reading sheet your child will bring home each week. This sheet will keep record of at least 2 hours of reading at home either silently or orally.

We feel it is very important that your child's reading level increase this year, and we hope to work in partnership with you to make this happen. On October 14th at 6:30 the Reading Committee will sponsor a potluck for parents and students involved in the new reading program. At this time we will describe the program and its goals as well as give you an opportunity to meet your child's teacher. If you have questions, please contact any of the members of the Reading Committee by calling the high school office at 865-3370.

Sincerely,

Toppenish High School Reading Committee

Tim Davison, Chair
Jeane O'Hara
John Magas
Leonor de Maldonado

John Cerna
Scott Dorr
Leo Galaviz
Erin Moore

Nancy Brulotte
Selena Escamilla
Rudy Ramos

You Are Invited!

What: Potluck Dinner and Reading Informational Meeting

When: October 14, 6:30 pm

Where: Toppenish High School Cafeteria

Why: To meet parents and share information about our new reading program

Who: Anyone interested in finding out how they can help their child improve their reading

Bring a dish and come join us!!!

Read, Read, Re

Eng. 9/10

Ms. O'Hara

Name ____________________

Week of :	Minutes	What I'm Reading	Parent Signature
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Total ______

Dear Parents: Please sign only if you personally saw your child reading! Total time per week should be at least two hours.

Dear Students: The ONLY way to improve is to practice, practice, practice!

Ms. O'Hara

Just Read It!

...then share it.

Looking for Charlie

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE UNITED STATES in Vietnam was at the same time less than a war and more than a war. It was an experience no American who lived through it would be eager to repeat. On the battlefront it was a limited engagement, without front lines or specific objectives; at home supporters of the war ("hawks") duked it out with opponents ("doves"), often violently and sometimes with tragic results.

The only objective of the American soldier was to "find, fix, and finish" Charlie. "Charlie" was the GI's nickname for the Vietcong, the communist guerrillas trying to overthrow the government of South Vietnam. Finding Charlie was not easy to do, for Charlie was found only when he wanted to be found. Mostly he attacked at night in black pajamas, and often stayed close to U.S. troops to avoid being bombed by U.S. warplanes. The Vietcong was not an army in the usual sense of the word. Charlie could be the innocent villager who shined your shoes in the daytime and attacked you at night; the lady who ironed your pants in the day and helped mortar your camp after dark; or the little beggar boy with sad eyes who suddenly blew you up with a hand grenade—and perhaps himself as well.

For this was a war of endless barbarities on both sides. The dead were mutilated, hospitals attacked, whole villages wiped out on a suspicion that some of the inhabitants were Vietcong. My Lai ["Me Ly"], one such village, became notorious in the United States; not because it was a worse incident of barbarity than others, but just because it caught the attention of the media. The American military tried to keep these incidents quiet. One officer said of My Lai: "It didn't happen, and besides the Vietnamese deserved it."

Readers Name ____________________

I listened to the above named reader read the passage to me:

Signature:	Date:
____________________	__________
____________________	__________
____________________	__________
____________________	__________

My Autobiography

READING 9/ ENG. 10
O'HARA

CHECK OFF THE PROJECTS ARE THEY ARE COMPLETED AND PLACED IN YOUR FILE:

- MY FAMILY ESSAY
- MY COAT OF ARMS
- MY FAVORITE SONG OR POEM
- A PICTURE OF MYSELF
- MY CHILDHOOD ESSAY
- MY HERO ESSAY
- MY BEST FRIEND/S ESSAY
- MY SCHOOL YEARS ESSAY
- MY GOALS - SHORT AND LONG TERM ESSAY
- WHERE I SEE MYSELF TEN YEARS FROM NOW ESSAY
- ABOUT 'ME' PAGE
- AUTOGRAPH PAGE

ORGANIZE YOUR BOOK AS YOU LIKE. DRAW A COVER PAGE, OR USE YOUR COAT OF ARMS FOR YOUR COVER PAGE.

ALL ESSAYS SHOULD BE ERROR FREE AND TYPED.

A COPY OF YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHY SHOULD GO IN YOUR PORTFOLIO.

All About ME

MY NAME____

MY FRIENDS CALL ME ________________________________

MY BEST QUALITY IS ________________________________

MY STRENGTHS ARE:

____
____
____

I AM WORKING ON:

____

WHAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME IS:

____

WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT SCHOOL IS:

____

I MOST LOOK FORWARD TO:

____

I NEVER WANT TO FORGET:

____

I WILL NEVER:

____

IF I COULD HAVE ONE WISH IT WOULD BE:

____

A TEACHER I WILL NEVER FORGET IS:

____

Dear Colleagues,

9-29-98

The week of October 19 through 25 is Teen Read Week. In order to create new readers and stimulate growth in reading skills the Reading Committee and the Teen Read Committee are sponsoring a contest to encourage reading. The winners from our school will be entered in the national contest.

The Reading and Teen Read Committees would like to ask you to join us in encouraging participation in this effort. We would further ask you to support our effort by making a donation which will be used for the prizes. We will also ask area businesses to contribute. We greatly appreciate any donation you could make.

If you would like to be part of these committees you are welcome to join us. We're all in this together.

TOGETHER WE CAN! THANK YOU!!!

Eileen Ray
Tim Davison
Jeane O'Hara
Nancy Brulotte
Selena Escamilla

John Magas
Erin Moore
Rudy Ramos
Leo Galaviz
Leonor de Maldonado

John Cerna
Steve Myers

SEVENTHGRADE

Suggested Genres and Text Features to Be Worked Toward by the End of Seventh Grade

FICTION
(Literary)

- Narrative—realistic, fantasy, traditional folktales, legends, fables, myths, tall tales
- Songs
- Letters (personal and functional)
- Diaries
- Poetry—rhymed, unrhymed, haiku, cinquain, ballads, contemporary, historical
- Plays
- Proverbs, Sayings, Idioms
- Essays
- Magazines
- Comics, Cartoons
- Historical and contemporary fiction
  - (Novels
  - Short stories)
- Sciencefiction
- Memoirs
- Classics

NONFICTION
(Informational, task, career)

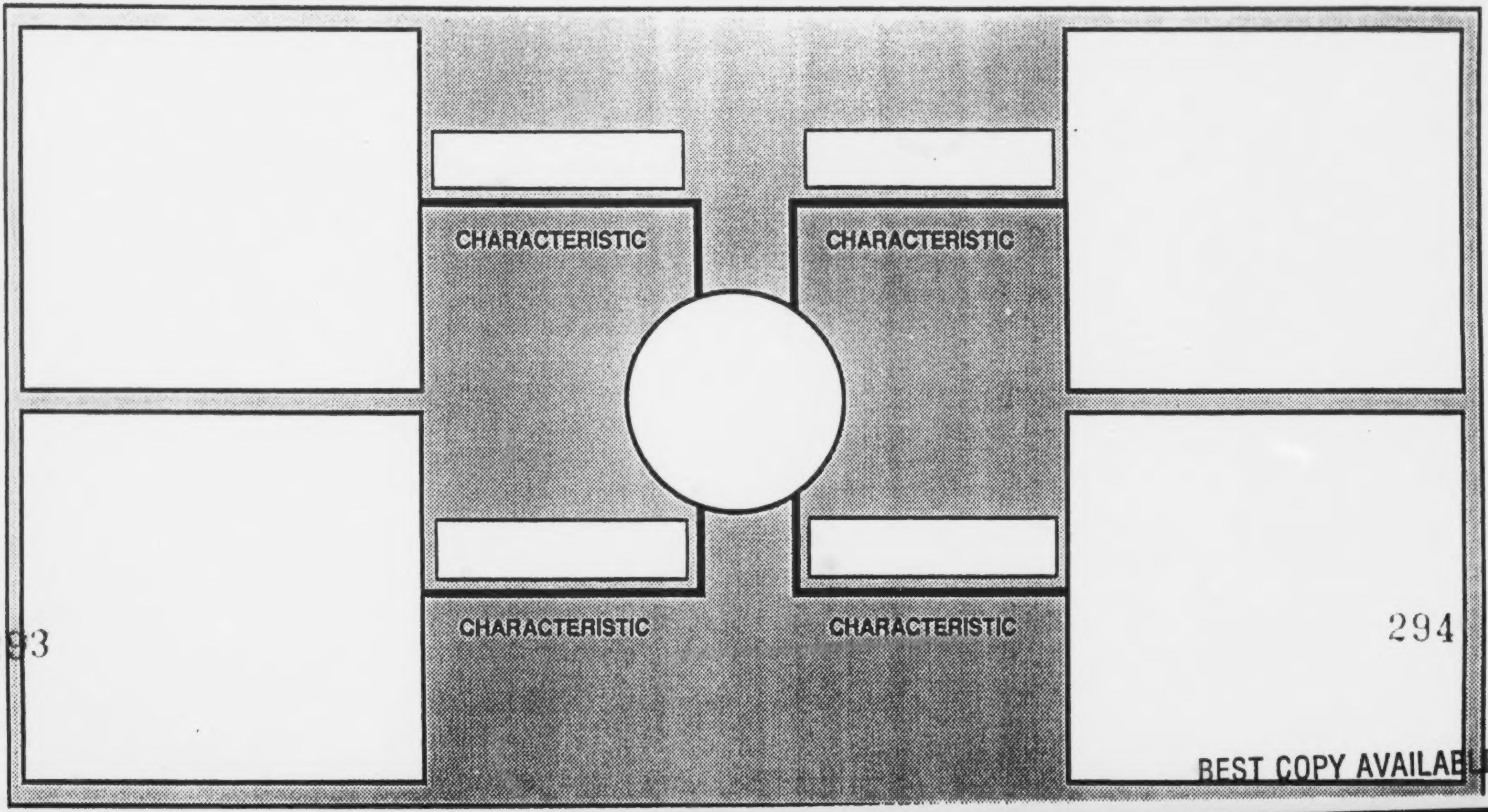
- Nonfiction texts should include science, social studies, math, the arts, health, fitness, and technology.
- Procedural and technical texts
- Exposition
- Report
- Dictionaries
- Informational posters
- Encyclopedias
- Almanacs
- Thesaurus
- Brochures
- Diaries/Journals
- Biographies, Autobiographies
- Speeches
- Interviews
- Advertisements
- Essays
- Atlases
- Newspapers
- Newspaper reports
- Magazines
- Magazine articles
- Memos
- Directories, Phone books
- Business letters
- Schedules
- Manuals
- Promotional material
- Editorials
- Policies
- Public documents—contracts, warranties, and guarantees
- Consumer reports
- Trade publications
- Research papers

TEXT FEATURES

- Labels
- Captions
- Story maps
- Charts
- Table of Contents
- Glossary
- Diagrams
- Maps and map keys/scales
- Chapter headings
- Acknowledgments
- Blurbs
- Index
- Introductions
- Timetables
- Parentheses
- References
- Footnotes
- Checklists
- Subheadings
- Tables
- Asterisk
- Graphs
- Paragraphs
- Dialog
- Quotation marks
- Directions
- Codes
- Abbreviations
- Dash
- Appendices
- Computer menus, searches, icons
- Foreword
- Bibliographies
- Chapter summaries
- Margin entries
- Symbols

DESCRIBING A CHARACTER

DIRECTIONS: An author lets us understand a character by words, feelings or actions in a story. Select from the story a character that you think is interesting. Write the name in the circle. What does the character say or do that tells you what kind of a person he or she is? Write one of the things that the character does or says in each box. Think about what that tells you about that person. Write that characteristic in the little box on the "arm" of the diagram.


CHARACTERISTIC
CHARACTERISTIC
CHARACTERISTIC
CHARACTERISTIC

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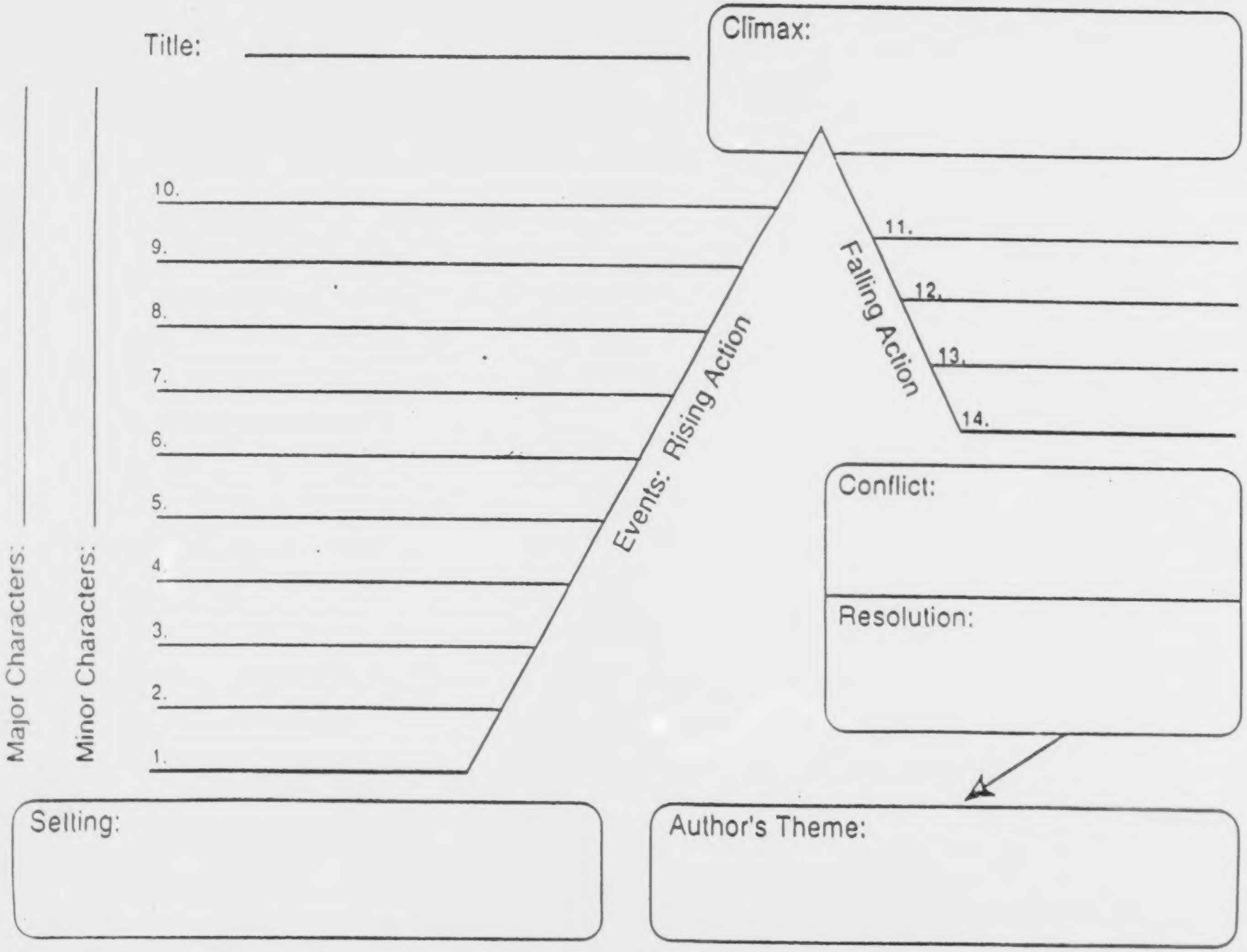
Story Map


Title:
Climax:
Major Characters:
Minor Characters:
10.
9.
8.
7.
6.
5.
4.
3.
2.
1.
Events: Rising Action
Falling Action
11.
12.
13.
14.
Conflict:
Resolution:
Setting:
Author's Theme:

READING TIPS FOR TEENS

*Keep a book going all the time. Carry it with you in your backpack.

*Try to read something for fun each night before you go to bed. It will help clear your mind.

*Talk about what you read with your friends. Suggest books they might like.

*If you liked the movie, read the book. Chances are you'll like it even better.

*Read out loud with a friend. Sharing can make you feel closer.

*If you have a particular concern or interest you'd like to read about, ask a librarian for recommendations. They are there to help you--no questions asked.

*Remember, you don't have to finish a book. If you don't like it, stop reading and find one you like.

*It's all right to skim parts of a book that don't interest you.

*Don't hurry when reading for fun. Take time to enjoy.

*Keep a book with you to read when you don't have anything else to do.

*Read while you are half-watching T.V.

*Read while you are waiting for the computer to boot up.

*Read to your younger brother or sister.

*Remember, not everyone, including some adults, is lucky enough to be able to read easily and well. Volunteer to help tutor a child or another student with reading problems.

Kennewick School District Comprehensive Reading Plan

Ardis Sparks and Tracy Hamar
Kennewick School District
Kennewick, Washington

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

ELEMENTS OF OUR PLAN

Where Are We? – 3rd Grade Reading Goal

- Assessment of 3rd Grade Reading
- Building Implementation

Where Are We Going? – Early Identification of Reading Difficulties

- 2nd Grade State Reading Assessment
- 2nd Grade District Functional Level Test
- 1st Grade District Reading Assessment
- Kindergarten Phonemic Awareness

Where Do We Want To Be? – Creating Readers and Thinkers

- Elementary School Standards and Accountability
- Middle School Standards, Accountability and Program Reconfiguration
- Traits of an Effective Reader: Implementation into Middle and High Schools

Third Grade Reading Goal

Assessment of 3rd Grade Reading

Goal:

- 90% of students will be reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade
- Students, in order to reach the 90% goal, need a score of 194 on the Spring Functional Level Reading Test

Findings:

- We have hard data on the achievement of individual buildings and the school district
- There has been a 16% improvement in functional reading level for the District's third graders
- Buildings are focused on reading, especially in the primary grades
- There may be a correlation between mobility and test scores

Kennewick School District's

Third Grade Reading Results

Test Period	Number of Students Tested	Number Enrolled	Number at or Above Standard	Percent Tested Passing	Percent Total Enrolled Passing
Fall 1995	892	968	578	64%	59%
Spring 1996	945	979	727	77%	74%
Fall 1996	935	982	529	57%	54%
Spring 1997	946	990	696	74%	70%
Fall 1997	940	1000	568	60%	57%
Spring 1998	977	1008	711	73%	71%
Fall 1998	1029	1050	600	58%	57%

Kennewick School District
Third Grade Students' Reading RIT Scores
Tested Fall 1997 and Spring 1998

	Percent of Students Below 174 RIT on Fall 1997 Testing	Percent of Students Below 174 RIT in Fall that Reached Spring RIT of 194	Percent of Students Between 174-188 RIT on Fall 1997 Testing	Percent of Students Between 174-188 RIT on Fall Testing Reaching Spring RIT of 194	Percent of Students at RIT of 188 on Fall 1997 Testing	Percent at 194 RIT on Spring Test if at 188 RIT on Fall Testing	Overall Percent at 194 RIT on Spring Testing
District Results	16%	20%	24%	61%	60%	97%	76%
Number of Students	140	28	207	126	526	510	664

NOTE: There were 873 third grade students that tested both in the fall and spring.

Functional Level Reading Test History

Control Group and District Percentages

Percentage of students reaching the Spring District Reading Goal:

3rd Grade: RIT of 194
4th Grade: RIT of 201
5th Grade: RIT of 207

	Total Control Group for Spring 1996 (3rd Grade)	District Percentage for Spring 1996 (3rd Grade)	Total Control Group for Spring 1997 (4th Grade)	District Percentage for Spring 1997 (4th Grade)	Total Control Group for Spring 1998 (5th Grade)	District Percentage for Spring 1998 (5th Grade)
Percent Reaching Goal	77%	74%	80%	73%	82%	74%
Number Of Students	682	979	682	983	682	1003

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Third Grade Reading Goal

Building Implementation

- **There is no "best" reading plan –**
  Increased scores to not correlate to any one model. Because facilities, faculties, resources and student populations are unique to each school, no one program is appropriate for every school.

- **Schools need their own plans –**
  There is no district plan that all schools follow. Each building has the responsibility to design, implement and measure their plan. With their own plans, schools are committed to achieving the highest student reading outcomes.

- **Intensive staff development -**
  Each school needs to incorporate reading instruction as a focused, long-term component of its staff development program.

First Steps

[redacted]

First Steps is a classroom resource that helps individual classroom teachers, schools, and educational districts achieve targeted literacy outcomes for students. Based on a philosophy of developmental learning, First Steps caters to the needs of all students regardless of age or range of abilities - linking the assessment of literacy to developmentally appropriate activities and teaching practices.

Training

1. First Steps Tutor Course
   The course trains teachers to become users and follow up support personnel.
2. First Steps School Based Course
   This course focuses on the training of the whole school staff in one or more areas of literary focus.

Course Content

- Examine how students learn and how teacher can best support that learning within the classroom
- Demonstrate how the developmental continua can be used to assess students' literary development
- Discuss and demonstrate a range of practical teaching strategies directly linked to the student's phase of development
- Provides time and processes for staff to construct a short term implementation plan
- Outlines the Parents as Partners materials that help involve parents in their child's literary development

Consortium On Reading Excellence (C.O.R.E)

C.O.R.E. provides direct training and school based implementation of a research-based approach to the teaching of reading. The goal of C.O.R.E. is to help schools develop balanced researched-based approach to the teaching of reading. The C.O.R.E. staff development program features 6 days of staff training and a number of demonstration days to be determined by the school district.

Training Days

Day One

Overview: Preparing to Lead
Participants get an overview of the research base of C.O.R.E. with an emphasis on the two sources of meaning words and passages.

Day Two

Decoding Words: Phonemic Awareness
Students learn that phonemic awareness is the knowledge of the sounds of language. Participants learn to apply the research on phonemic awareness and to use several assessment tools.

Day Three

Decoding Words: Developing Alphabetic Awareness
This session focuses on building from phonemic awareness to the systematic direct teaching of phonics.

Day Four

The Reading Spelling Connection
Participants will continue to work on the systematic instruction of phonics. Spelling skills are connected to phonics instruction and assessment.

Day Five

Comprehension Issues
This session moves from spelling to building vocabulary to a schoolwide reading plan. The focus is on getting meaning from text.

Day Six

Passages: Building Strategies
A continued discussion of the ideas and strategies to build comprehension. The day ends with bringing all the topics of the training together.

Early Identification of Reading Difficulties

✍ Second Grade State Reading Test –

Research suggests that students who, at the beginning of second grade, are not fluent and accurate readers will have difficulty catching up with their peers. All second graders are assessed in the fall using the Developmental Reading Assessment. Intervention plans, with a home and school component, are designed and implemented for students significantly below grade level. Students who were significantly below grade level in the fall are reassessed in the spring.

✍ Second Grade Functional Level Test –

Our district wide assessment for reading is the Functional Level Test for grades 3-8. Beginning in 1999, all second graders will take the Spring Functional Level Reading Test. Achievement data will be used to identify areas of concern, and guide instruction at the beginning of third grade.

✍ First Grade Reading Assessment –

All first grade students will be assessed, beginning in January 2000, using the Developmental Reading Assessment. The focus of the assessment will be accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

✍ Kindergarten Phonemic Awareness Assessment –

Phonemic awareness is a strong predictor of a student's success in learning to read. Beginning in January 2000, all kindergarten students will be given a phonemic awareness assessment.

Creating Readers and Thinkers
Elementary Standards and Accountability

Primary Interventions

By identifying reading difficulties in grades K, one, and two, interventions can be implemented immediately. The goal is to assure student growth toward district academic standards.

Clear Academic Standards

There are clear academic standards for grades three through five in reading, writing and math. Fifth grade also has a performance standard that includes elements of technology, demonstration or presentation skills, research, and writing skills. These match the State EALS and the Kennewick School District frameworks. The goal of these standards is to assure that students are on a path of continuous progress.

Objective Assessment of Standards

Assessments include the Spring Functional Level Test and various classroom teacher assessments, evidenced by supporting documentation.

Intermediate Intervention

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) may be started beginning in third grade, when a teacher, parent, or principal has a concern about a child's performance using the third grade assessment measures as an indicator of progress toward the standard. The PEP is designed to help the student make growth toward the district academic standards. Interventions, and those responsible for each, are developed and progress toward the standard is monitored throughout the year.

Accountability

Progress on the PEP is reviewed quarterly by teacher and parent, and revised if the student is not making satisfactory progress. One of the consequences for fifth grade students not meeting the academic goals is summer school.

Creating Readers and Thinkers

Middle School Standards, Accountability and Program Reconfiguration

Standards and Accountability

Middle School students are expected to demonstrate continued progress toward district and State standards, as measured by the Functional Level Test and the Washington Assessment of Student Learning. Student progress is also monitored using classroom teacher assessments, evidenced by supporting documentation. Students not meeting the standards will begin attending alternative class offerings.

Middle School Program Reconfiguration

As a direct result of the fifth grade and middle school standards, middle schools are reconfiguring their curriculum and instruction. Incoming sixth graders who did not meet the fifth grade standard and may not have completed summer school attend an extra period each day. Student progress is reviewed at the end of each quarter, and those meeting the sixth grade standards will be exited from the program. Additionally, students who are identified as below the standard in reading will be attending a second reading class during regular school hours.

Creating Readers and Thinkers
Traits of an Effective Reader:

Implementation into Middle and High Schools

Rationale: The Traits of an Effective Reader is an analytical instructional model that can be easily implemented, regardless of the content area. One of its primary elements is assessment, making this model ideal for meeting state standards and requirements.

Specifics:

- Staff development model used: Leslie Thompson provides training and inservice over several months of implementation. The 40 teachers trained represent all content areas at the middle and high school levels. This is also available to 4th and 5th grade teachers as staff development; taught by local, trained staff.

- Study groups were established across content areas in each school. Building representatives who have been trained in the six-trait model are leaders in their buildings. Regular meetings are held where teachers assist and support each other in implementing the program in their classrooms.

- Lesson plans, from all content areas and schools, are being collected and distributed for practical application.

Conclusion and Focus Group Results

Assuring Competency in Reading
Assessment and Evaluation Conference
February 25-26, 1999
Vancouver, Washington

Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, NWREL staff has compiled the results of the focus group questions and feedback from the conference participants. Secondly, we have gathered data from a concluding survey that demonstrates various points of interest that educators have in regard to reading assessment, curriculum, research, and theory, and instruction.

In short, Northwest educators concluded in both the focus group sessions and in their survey responses, that staff development focused on good reading instruction and assessment is primary to the development of good readers in our region.

Educators revealed again and again, the need for practical, hands-on application of reading practice in the classroom. They asked for publications, training, conferences, and administration support for their continued growth as reading teachers.

Northwest participants supported the national trend towards developing strong reading identities in children grades kindergarten through third grade. Further, participants felt that continued training for teachers in reading strategies was most helpful in sustained, long-term effort.

Finally, in terms of the relationship between standards and reading, participants felt that building support of the interpretation, alignment, and implementation of standards was paramount for all students ultimately achieving success in meeting standards in reading and a connection to lifelong learning.

Grade Level Focus Groups
Kindergarten through Third Grade

Focus Group Scenario:

We are members of a district reading cadre that has been assigned the task of meeting weekly during the school year and making some major decisions in regard to the direction our district plans to go with the development of reading skills for primary students.

Question 1
How do we develop a balanced literacy program that allows for phonemic awareness and constructing meaning?

The group recommended the following steps:

1) Clarify WHY the district is looking at reading skills
2) Verify common language
3) Define a "balanced literacy program" components
4) Establish where district is in terms of materials, what's working, could use T-chart to draft these ideas:
   - emphasize what we're doing now and what needs changing
   - assess student strengths/weaknesses, needs of student population
5) Do a Literature on subject, favorite authors, ERIC search
6) Involve community early on to avoid alarmism or resistance
7) Get teachers up to speed and involved on an ongoing basis – could use literacy circles

Question 2
Are we going to adopt a reading program such as First Steps or Success for All, or should we develop a district-specific reading program that aligns with state standards and allows for individual teacher choice in terms of text material? What are the pros and cons for each choice?

1) Research programs, use task force to investigate make site visits to find a program that addresses student population. The reasons for doing this are that it enables you to eliminate programs that don't meet your needs
2) the school team can then attend to the needs of students at all grade levels
3) How do you avoid resistance to selected program?
4) Pull in average teachers to pilot test and serve on committees
5) How do you report weaknesses/pros and cons of specific programs without raising legal questions about validity of opinions
6) What is the research on the effectiveness of programs?
7) Collect grade-level feedback on appropriateness of different parts of a text/material. Establish what portions each grade levels will cover.
8) Should consider mobility of teachers and students if teacher choice is to be adopted

If you have a list and sequence of skills to be taught then teachers can pick and choose but maintain skill levels for students….It's time consuming to do ground-laying but document lasts longer

9) Need accountability if teachers are to be autonomous
10) Interesting how easily we get away from "aligns with state standards." "Advocates" are difficult to change or admit there are weaknesses to what they're doing.

Question 3
Our state has a third grade reading benchmark that requires each student to complete an oral re-telling as one of the assessment tasks to meet the benchmark. What five key criteria should each student include in his or her retelling?

1) Clear statement of main idea or purpose
2) Progress towards solution to that problem
3) Setting
4) Character
5) Events in a sequence
6) Inference
7) Prediction
8) Conclusion

Question 4
Our district has a large percentage of children who are second language learners, at-risk students, and/or possess a migrant status. What daily instructional activities are we going to recommend helping students with these needs increase their achievement?

1) One-on-one tutoring for 1st graders
2) Assessment tool to see if 2nd language students have a reading or a language barrier
3) Look at whole child, Are they well fed, healthy, rested, family value/reading ability?
4) Use Title funds for real title kids, get ESL students into pull-out programs
5) Use extended day for weak students
6) Push extra-curricular, informal involvement for ESL students to learn language with peers
7) Communicate caring attitude to needy students

Question 5
We would like to involve our parents and community in our literacy program. What steps should we take to invite, inform, and involve them?

Offer them food and their children performing….and they will come!

Fourth Grade Through Eighth Grade

Focus Group Scenario:

I am a fourth-grade teacher. My students have read primarily narrative texts in kindergarten through third grade before entering my classroom. My state tests all fourth-grade students using a large-scale test comprised of a short passage with multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and an extended response. In past years the state has selected an informational text for the children to read. How can I support the growth of informational reading in my classroom?

Question 1
Should I be using a reading program that is developmentally skill-based or one that is individualized reading that is meaning-based?

1) The teachers felt that, in order to meet standards, one must employ multiple approaches for teaching reading. Most of the teachers would employ all approaches to meet the needs of the students, to address multiple intelligences, and to address a variety of learning styles.

2) One difficulty with skill-based texts was there lack of consistency in developing all the skills. A skill series may develop one area of need (say, realizing context) very well but fall short in developing another area (say, comprehension). Many of them seem to have success with the Silver Burdett series.

3) One difficulty with individualized reading with self-selection was locating appropriate reading material for students to select. Too often, the school library's offerings had limiting range of reading levels across a less-than-motivating range of themes. Trade books were a popular item.

4) The teachers felt that teacher/student conferences were important for setting goals and integrating multiple approaches. They argued that assessment that demanded extended responses in multiple contexts were important for stressing critical thought and comprehension.

Question 2
Should I be teaching narrative and informational texts in the same way in my classroom?

1) Developmental issues are important in answering this question. Too often, textbooks are crammed with information, so its more difficult for students to keep the information cognitively organized from page to page. It was also difficult to use narrative strategies like "story maps." Since textbooks are less motivating for more readers than narrative books, it is more difficult to get students to silently read them. However, if one wishes to connect a concept to a class demonstration in a science experiment or with an anatomical model, textbook material better serves the student

as they it read aloud and attempt to construct the connection. Therefore, although teachers felt that informational texts were often more complicated to understand and decode, such books have their place in the classroom.

2) Because textbooks are seemingly more complex than most age appropriate narratives, it is more important that teachers critique textbooks for their features, their readability, their vocabulary, and their content background. Although few districts involved parents when doing textbook evaluation, one principal felt that getting parents involved in this process could prove beneficial and enlightening.

3) Narrative texts are excellent for students who need to practice their reading. There is less of a need to explain new concepts or decode an overabundance of esoteric words, so the student can get pleasure out of the mere act of reading. Moreover, some districts are constructing individual education plans using narrative materials to coordinate reading practice, while getting the parents involved in encouraging reading.

Question 3
I know what the assessment models will be on the standardized tests, should I focus on these models in my classroom?

1) Teachers commented that they were not in favor of knowing tomes of state regulations in order to understand what and how to assess. Since the state is asking much, it should give their expertise and financial support to see that it happens. It is better that the state show us what a good program looks like, and that the state train us and support our pedagogical development even after the training. Teachers working with other teachers after training would also be a beneficial practice.

2) Moreover, the state should cooperatively examine the program with us in an effort to understand what works and what doesn't work. A hotline about the latest developments may also be offered.

3) We need opportunities to cooperatively plan curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Principals, as instructional leaders, should help us understand the standards, without turning planning into another faculty meeting.

4) One type of program that works encourages students to practice with other students. Strong readers could ask comprehension questions or encourage oral reading. Alternatively, students could go to a central place everyday and read. Students could create a story board, explain their story boards, and that could be evaluated. In the end, no matter what is adopted, each student needs to be encouraged and given the time to practice their reading.

Ninth Grade Through Twelfth Grade

Focus Group Scenario

: We are a faculty at a remote rural school, where ethnic culture has more power than the educational system, want to instill a foundation for lifelong learning in students who primarily work in vocational settings following high school. Where do we start?

Question 1
What sort of action research should we do in our community to understand the kind of texts our students will primarily read when they leave our high school? Should we then incorporate some of those texts in appropriate content areas? If so, what would that look like?

1) Some of the group participants stated that the first thing this faculty should do is to set benchmarks for the students to the goal and purpose of the portfolios. One participant explained that her school uses an "articulation team" to paint a picture of what an ideal graduating 12th grader looks like.

2) Other participants suggested that the scenario's faculty study where graduates end up: what percentage goes to college, to vocational occupations, etc. Many participants agreed that a good way to instill a sense of purpose into the portfolios was to incorporate student visits into community to prepare their transition from school to work. Others felt that a good way to prepare students was to provide a forum for business people from the community to talk to classes.

Question 2
We constantly walk the balance between the rigors of a classical education where we teach literary analysis and a practical education where we teach the text of a snowmobile repair manual. Is there a way to streamline reading instruction that includes elements of both types of reading? What does it look like?

1) Many felt that a reading portfolio could incorporate texts from other content areas to reinforce student learning in other classes. Many teachers offered suggestions for types of texts that students will need to read long after graduation. Business texts, manuals, newspapers, voting pamphlets, job applications, and magazines were some of the suggestions offered by participants.

2) A major concern of several teachers was how to find texts that stimulate student interest.

Question 3
How can the professional development process complement the community's culture?

1) One participant who attended the Toppenish presentation thought that their use of the media to reinforce their reading efforts was brilliant.
2) Further, since a small community is involved, the use of community events and linking school-to work, and involving other businesses in the professional development was mentioned as being important.

Topical Focus Groups
TAG, Special Needs Students, ESL, Bilingual, Migrant, and Title One

Focus Group Questions

Question 1
What are some of the special needs in reading that each of these groups represent?

Talented and Gifted Students:
The focus group participants felt that TAG students need appropriate challenges and compacted curriculum. Several teachers felt that incorporating ESL students into TAG programs was a major challenge.

Special Needs:
The biggest challenge teachers faced was the amount of time that must be spent with special needs students. One teacher raved about the "Kids in Between" catalog that offered products geared toward special needs students. Other resources teachers pointed to included "Globe Feron," "Scholastic," and "New Bridge."

English as a Second Language:
Many teachers pointed to the necessity that teachers be trained in sheltered teaching techniques. Many also discussed the need for parental involvement. Some teachers felt that parents often resist involvement due to their own "fear-factors" and embarrassment at their low reading ability. One participant felt that an effective way to get parents involved was to simply have them read anything to their kids, even if they simply show pictures or make up the story. Some participants also raised the issue of second language learners and standards—at what point should ESL students need English to meet standards?

Title I Students
Many participants stressed the need for parent/ educators and volunteers. Others agreed, but insisted that these parents and volunteers must be adequately trained and must meet firm guidelines. (background checks, etc) Students must feel a sense of ownership in the process of meeting standards.

Topical Focus Groups
Developing a Three-Year Staff Development Plan in Reading

Focus Group Questions
What are some of the issues involved in developing a three-year staff development plan?

Administration:

- We need buy-in by administration for commitment to a three-year plan.
- We need clarity on budget, district funding for long-term/ multiple year.
- We need flexibility on time especially in tapping into waivers from the state.

Staff:

- The training is one piece, but we also need clear outcomes, goals, follow-up, and collaborative planning time.
- We need to define what we mean by "staff development," address the shortages of substitute teachers for coverage, and the lack of community understanding for the need for staff development.
- Who decides when the staff development will be? If teachers have input in scheduling, they may be more likely to attend.
- Peer coaching, observations, surveys, parent input measures are options.
- What are the givens or non-negotiables?
- How do we get from where we are to where we want to be?

Timing:

- How do you attract teachers to summer training?
- Have it in more populated areas if rural concerns are an issue
- Some people are in summer classes, can that be "counted" as professional development
- We should provide stipends
- Base offering on surveys
- Use local experts
- Develop leadership cadre to support staff development at building level
- Staff schism resulting from pedagogical differences may need to be addressed before staff development. It can be prevented by being up-front
- Develop shared value collaboratively
- Assess status quo with multiple measures – look at student achievement, faculty as learners. What do we expect? What outcomes do we anticipate?

Support

- Get principals and superintendents on board.
- First convince the board so they understand the need for change.
- Involve students in strategic planning, site councils

- Site councils may be a place to start. How do you bring requests to site councils?
- State department is helping with capacity building. When they're clear with goals and support, it enables districts to plan

Technical Assistance Providers:

- Need help with process models
- Get into schools
- Empowerment vs. top down
- "Unity of purpose," leadership

To ensure professional development:

- building administrator support, and familiarity with what you're doing
- follow-up
- to attend with another teacher in building
- implementation time
- focused/purposeful training

Topical Focus Groups
Developing the Effectiveness of Aligning Curriculum and Assessment

Question 1
What is the link between assessment and standards?
Teachers need to look at the assessment data (classroom and proficiency test) and talk to each other about it during planning. If the assessment has benchmarks that requires students to critically think and solve problems to score well, there is no problem with teaching towards those benchmarks or criteria to be successful. We are not saying teach items, but we are saying that one teaches the thinking qualities and skills demanded from those items. A classroom curriculum that lines up with those qualities is effectively aligned with the assessment.

Question 2
What is the link between assessment and the classroom?
Assessment should demonstrate development. It should reflect how students grow or fail to grow over time. One needs to produce a body of evidence over multiple occasions to accomplish this end. Portfolios are good for demonstrating growth, but they are difficult to manage. Too often, the next teacher does not know what to do with them or lacks the time to use them properly.

Question 3
How do we make assessment information purposeful?
Eliminate redundancy. Design teams consisting of parents, administrators, teachers, and students could examine curriculum and assessment practices to note when topics are overemphasized and seldom emphasized. A balance of content and thinking skills needs to agreed upon. When using objective tests, pick out mistake patterns and follow-up with feedback and instruction. Look for gaps in the knowledge considering what the curriculum says the student should know and what the assessment implies.

Question 4
What is the role of the parent in assessment?
Parents need to informed through a news letter or phone call or both. They need to understand what their child knows and what their child should know.

Needs Clarification Survey Results: "Assuring Competency in Reading" Advisory Conference

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Assessment and Evaluation Program envisioned the "Assuring Competency in Reading" Advisory Conference as a platform to promote a deeper knowledge base in the issues of reading assessment, standards-based instructional approaches, and comprehensive reform efforts. To launch each conference session, representatives from state education departments presented Keynote Addresses to provide an overview of that state's mission to improve education. During the "Promising Practices" session, NWREL staff members shared ideas on reading curriculum, reading comprehension, childhood reading development, and utilizing volunteer reading tutors. In the "Successful School Shares" and "Master Teacher Talks," teachers from around the country modeled effective teaching and assessment strategies. The session on "Comprehensive School Reform" provided the opportunity for teachers and administrators to share the successes and setbacks of their school reform efforts.

The goal of the "advisory" component of the conference was to gain a better sense of the needs of conference participants in the areas of reading assessment and instruction. The final session of the conference consisted of "focus groups" in which teachers gathered to discuss their ideas about issues such as portfolio assessment, special needs readers, content area reading, or curriculum/ standards alignment. Moreover, a Needs Clarification Survey was distributed as a tool to assess the needs of conference participants. The results of the survey will be used to help focus NWREL's technical assistance and training.

Conference Participant Characteristics

Current teaching responsibilities	
K-2	19.1
3-5	20.0
6-8	24.5
9-12	11.8

Current administrative responsibilities	
Building Level	13.6
District Level	10.0
ESD Level	2.7
State Level	0.9

Most conference participants (72.7%) were teachers. Middle school teachers represented the highest number of participants (24.5%), while the lowest percentage of teachers came from the high school level (11.8%). Attending administrators (24.5% of conference participants) were most represented at the building level (13.6%) and district level (10%).

State of Residence			
Alaska	1.8	Montana	7.3
Arizona	4.5	Oregon	14.5
Colorado	1.8	South Dakota	1.8
Idaho	2.7	Washington	62.7
Minnesota	0.9		

The state most represented by conference participants (62.7%) was Washington. Oregon also accounted for a substantial number of participants (14.5%)

Reading Needs Clarification Survey Results

Which of the following areas would you be interested in gaining additional information about? (Rank from 1 to 5)	**Most interested**			**Least interested**	
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Reading Assessment	31.8	26.2	21.5	15.9	4.7
Reading Curriculum	22.6	24.5	23.6	19.8	9.4
Instructional Practices	55.6	30.6	9.3	2.8	1.9
ESL, Special Needs, TAG Students	8.6	26.7	21.0	18.1	25.7
Professional Reading Development of Teachers	22.4	21.5	18.7	15.9	21.5

The overwhelming majority of conference participants (86.2%) were most interested in gaining additional information about instructional practices. Only 4.7% of participants were not interested in instructional practices. Other areas of interest were reading assessment (58%), reading curriculum (47.1%), and professional reading development of teachers (43.9%). Participants were least interested in gaining information about special needs students (43.8% least interested) and professional development of teachers (37.4% least interested).

What areas of professional reading development do you see educators in need of most? (Rank from 1 to 5)	**In need of most**				**In need of least**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Theoretical understanding of reading	12.0	15.7	17.6	27.8	26.9
Practical applications of reading instruction	57.8	21.1	10.1	7.3	3.7
Understanding of and ability to create assessment tools that match standards	25.9	37.0	18.5	12.0	6.5
Curriculum to help support student achievement of reading standards	26.9	29.6	25.9	8.3	9.3
Reflections about own teaching and reading standards	10.3	27.1	19.6	23.4	19.6

Again, a large percentage of the participants saw educators in most need of practical applications of reading instruction (78.9%). Other areas of most need were assessment tools that match standards (62.9%) and curriculum to help support achievement of standards (56.5%). Participants saw least need for theoretical understanding of reading (54.7% in need of least) and reflections about their own teaching (43% in need of least).

What kind of support from Laboratories do you believe is most helpful for K-12 educators? (Rank from 1 to 5)	**Most helpful**				**Least helpful**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Training in the form of reading institutes and workshops	56.5	30.6	8.3	3.7	0.9
Publications that demonstrate the best reading instructional practices and assessment techniques	21.3	29.6	24.1	15.7	9.3
Technical assistance in the form of evaluation of reading programs	8.3	22.2	26.9	26.9	15.7
Research and dissemination of theoretical reading studies	7.5	11.2	21.5	29.0	30.8
Interpretations of state standards and direct applications in the classroom	31.2	25.7	25.7	6.4	11.0

Participants felt the most helpful support from NWREL to be from training sessions such as reading institutes and workshops (87.1%). Other "most helpful" kinds of support are interpretations and classroom applications of state standards (56.9%) and publications that demonstrate the best reading practices and assessment techniques (50.9%). Participants felt least helped by research and dissemination of theoretical reading studies

(59.8% least helpful) and technical assistance in the form of evaluation of reading programs (42.6% least helpful).

Indicate which grade levels you would like to receive more training and technical assistance to enable student readers to increase their achievement and meet standards. (Rank from 1 to 5)	Most interested			Least interested		
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Birth to kindergarten	16.9	15.7	16.9	11.2	19.1	20.2
K-2	40.0	21.1	10.5	8.4	16.8	3.2
3-5	26.0	27.1	28.1	16.7	0	2.1
6-8	36.1	14.4	16.5	29.9	1.0	2.1
9-12	18.9	13.3	16.7	11.1	35.6	4.4
School to work or higher education	2.5	11.4	11.4	7.6	10.1	57.0

The conference participants were most interested that grade levels K-2 (61.1%), 3-5 (53.1%), and 6-8 (50.5%) receive more training and technical assistance. According to the participants, the grade levels they would least like to see receive more assistance include school to work or higher education (67.1%), 9-12 (40%), and birth to kindergarten (39.3%).

What types of training do you think support educators in reading development the most?	1	2	3
Three or four day "Trainer of Training" Sessions during release time or summer break	23.1	41.3	35.6
One or two day workshops during early-release time or in-services	24.5	30.2	45.3
Sustained study teams throughout a school year with training, focus groups, peer and collaborative work	57.1	26.7	16.2

When asked what types of training they felt supported educators the most, the majority of the participants chose sustained study teams with training, focus groups, peer and collaborative work. (57.1%). Slightly more participants were interested in three or four day "trainer of training" (64.4% chose this response first or second) than one or two day workshops (54.7%).

What kind of publications do you think are most helpful for educators in the field of reading?	**1**	**2**	**3**
Training manuals that outline assessment models using real student examples, scoring guides, specific criteria and sample tasks	77.4	10.4	12.3
Parent and community guides that encourage participation in their children's reading development	9.4	49.1	41.5
Picture-book and young adult bibliographies that guide selection of texts with specific standards	12.4	43.8	43.8

Participants overwhelmingly felt that the most helpful publications for educators in the field of reading are training manuals that outline assessment models (77.4%). They were nearly equally interested in parent and community guides and picture-book and young adult bibliographies.

What kind of technical assistance do you believe is most beneficial to educators in the field of reading?	**1**	**2**	**3**
Evaluation of present reading programs	16.0	43.4	40.6
Identification of proven reading practices	77.8	18.5	3.7
Ways of reporting and disaggregating reading assessment data	6.6	37.7	55.7

The kind of technical assistance most beneficial to educators is identification of proven reading practices, according to 77.8% of conference participants. Participants were more interested in evaluation of present reading programs (59.4% chose this first or second) than ways of reporting and disaggregating reading assessment data (44.3%)

What kind of research do you think is most helpful for educators in the field of reading?	**1**	**2**	**3**
Theoretical research focused on scholarly and pedagogical topics	1.0	16.3	82.7
Practical "action-research" focused on identifying better instructional practices	87.7	12.3	0
Studies that select "blue ribbon" classrooms based on specific criteria	13.5	71.2	15.4

Nearly all conference participants (87.7%) felt that the research most helpful to educators is practical "action-research" focused on identifying better instructional practices. The

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participants were also interested in studies that select "blue ribbon" classrooms based on specific criteria. Most participants (82.7%) were least interested in theoretical research focused on scholarly and pedagogical topics.

What kind of interpretations of state reading standards and direct assessments of them in the classroom are most effective to educators in the field of reading?	**1**	**2**	**3**
Large-scale assessments providing school district and state data	2.9	5.8	91.3
Building-level assessments focused on standards-aligned goals developed by staff	33.7	61.5	4.8
Classroom assessments aligned with state reading standards	65.1	32.1	2.8

A majority of conference participants (97.2 % ranked it 1 or 2) felt that classroom assessments aligned with reading standards were the kind of interpretations of reading standards most effective to educators. A large number of participants (95.2) also felt building-level assessments to be effective to educators. An overwhelming number of participants (91.3%) felt large-scale assessments providing school district and state data to be least effective to educators in the field of reading.

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